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# THE PLIGHT OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN MEN IN URBAN AMERICA

## HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

## COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED SECOND CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

ON

THE SCOPE OF THE PROBLEMS YOUNG BLACK MEN FACE IN AMERICAN SOCIETY. AT ISSUE: WHAT IS THE OUTLOOK FOR YOUNG BLACK MEN TODAY AND IN THE FUTURE? WHAT SYSTEMIC FACTORS CONTRIBUTE TO IMPEDE THEIR PROGRESS IN MAINSTREAM SOCIETY? HOW HAVE THESE PROBLEMS AFFECTED OUR CITIES? WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS FOR OUR NATION? HOW CAN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT BEST USE ITS LIMITED RESOURCES TO HELP SOLVE THESE PROBLEMS?

MARCH 19 AND MAY 21, 1991

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# THE PLIGHT OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN MEN IN URBAN AMERICA

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TUESDAY, MARCH 19, 1991

U.S. Senate,
Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs,
*Washington, DC.*

The committee met at 10:05 a.m., in room SD-538, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Senator Donald W. Riegle, Jr. (chairman of the committee) presiding.

## OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN RIEGLE

The Chairman. The committee will come to order.

Let me welcome all those in attendance this morning.

We do not have nearly the space in the Banking Committee room to accommodate everyone who wants to be present today.

So we have an overflow room in which this proceeding is being broadcast and presented.

I want to welcome all those in attendance today, particularly Governor Wilder, who is with us.

But also a very distinguished set of panelists who've come to be with us today, and who have great wisdom and insight to share with us.

Today, I think, we undertake one of the most important work efforts that it's been my privilege to be involved in in my 25 years in Congress.

I've lost track of the number of hearings that I've attended over the years in the House and Senate.

I think this hearing is as important as any that have taken place over that period of time.

We're going to be examining the magnitude and the implications and the barriers that are hindering the advancement of young black men in American society.

I particularly want to thank my colleague, Senator Sanford, for his extraordinary leadership in this area.

That's not new from Senator Sanford.

It stretches back over decades.

But it's certainly something that has great importance to our country at this time.

The problems confronting black men in urban America are deeply interwoven with an array of problems plaguing our cities and our Nation as a whole.

A conversion of historic and current forces have impeded the inclusion of black men in the mainstream of society.

These forces include, among others, discrimination, crime, homelessness, drug abuse, AIDS, and others.

A poignant illustration of the tragedy of young black men is seen in the case of Anthony Riggs, whose name is in the news today.

Anthony Riggs was a 22-year-old black man who had just returned from the Persian Gulf as a war hero, only to be gunned down on the streets in Detroit, MI, yesterday.

This tragic event is all too common for young black men in our country.

In fact, homicide is the leading cause of death for all black males between the ages of 20 and 29.

Many experts argue that heightened crime is due, in part, to the deterioration of economic opportunities for black men.

I'm sure we'll hear some thoughts on that today.

Recent employment statistics for the fourth quarter of 1990 indicate that the U.S. unemployment rate for black males was 19 percent, compared to 7.8 percent for white males.

In my home State of Michigan, black male unemployment exceeds 17 percent.

In major urban areas, the unemployment figures are even bleaker.

It has been estimated that as many as 64 percent of black men who live in poverty areas of central cities, are either unemployed or not in the labor force.

Surprisingly, education has little relation to the disparity in the unemployment rate.

Black engineers, for example, are unemployed at three times the rate of white engineers.

In fact, statistics indicate that the higher the educational level, the greater the employment gap between black and white men in our society.

Even when employed, black male college graduates earn less than their white counterparts.

In fact, the earnings gap between these two groups is widening.

In 1975, black males with 4 or more years of college earned 90 cents for every dollar earned by their white counterparts.

However, by 1989, black men earned only 79 cents for each dollar earned by their white male equivalents.

The income and employment disparities confronting black men have consequences in the banking and housing areas.

These disparities resulted in decreased access to credit for housing, and for small business development.

So the traditional avenues of economic empowerment, owning a home and a business, are also disproportionately unavailable to African-American men in our country.

The plight of black men not only impairs the economic strength of the Nation but it also imposes great demands on scarce local resources.

It is just an astonishing fact that, of young black men in our society that have been detained and imprisoned, the cost of just that alone is estimated to be some $2.5 billion, not to mention the incredible human waste involved.

In fact, 25 percent of young black men between the ages of 23 and 29, are either in prison, on parole, or on probation.

The loss to society of unrealized potential and contributions and just the human loss implicit in those numbers just ought to break the heart of any person who professes to have a humane attitude about what goes in this country.

So, from a competitiveness perspective, as a Nation, from an urban economic perspective, and from a moral perspective, this problem has got to be addressed, and we've got to find a way to turn these trends around.

We are fortunate, as I said earlier, to have a distinguished group of panelists with us today.

In addition to Governor Wilder, we have from my home State of Michigan, Dr. McKinney of the Mott Foundation.

And others, whom we will be introducing a little bit later.

But, in deference, let me call next on Senator Sanford.

### OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR SANFORD

Senator SANFORD. First of all, I thank Senator Riegle for convening this hearing on the status of the black males in urban America.

I hope the attention of this hearing and the recommendations included in the testimony of our excellent witnesses will help us formulate some solutions.

This is a subject that a great many people have wanted to avoid because it's complex and it's difficult.

And that's really the reason that I wanted to try to do something about it.

Poverty and slums and almost all of the ills of America are tied up, somehow, with the status of black males.

We simply have to understand the problem better, and try to do something about it.

Here in this great land of America, the land of opportunity, it simply will not do for us to continue to have a situation where a large segment of the population is born at a disadvantage and can't work out of disadvantage.

This hearing is a first step.

With the assistance and leadership of Governor Wilder, Dr. Dorothy Height, Congressman Ed Towns, and John Jacobs, we have already organized the second step, a bipartisan Commission on the status of black males.

The Commission consists of elected officials, corporate officers, foundation presidents, educators, and civic leaders.

The function of the Commission will be to assist Congress, minority organizations and related agencies in developing a national policy for addressing the black male crisis.

And it is a crisis.

The testimony presented at this hearing will be discussed by the Commission at its first meeting in April.

A second Senate hearing will be held in May, at which time, the Commission will hold its first national conference in Washington.

The Commission has selected a group of nationally known scholars to assist in preparing a comprehensive analysis and report that we hope will lead to some national initiatives.

Three of the Commission's scholars are participants in this hearing, and I look forward to hearing from them.

It's surprising, maybe, to some, that we are having such a hearing.

But I believe, as the chairman said, we simply must examine this matter because it's interwoven into almost all of the domestic problems in America.

We are proud to see our soldiers come back from the Persian Gulf.

It's notable that 17.5 percent of all active duty personnel in the military consist of black males.

That's far above the percentage within the population.

And I think another point, from an economic point of view, is that black Americans, along with other minorities, are projected to comprise 57 percent of the new labor market entrance in the year 2,000.

We simply can't afford to have people in any category stay unqualified.

Black males also have the lowest life expectancy, and it's not because males that live are not getting older.

It's because of a high death rate for black males in their most productive years.

Economic efficiency is also reduced by the fact that the economy underutilizes and undercompensates those black men who are participating or seek to participate in the economy.

Black teenage males had an unemployment rate of 48 percent compared to 25 percent for white teenage males.

Black males generally had an unemployment rate of 19 percent, relative to 7.8 percent for white males.

And it's not just a matter of education, as you might immediately think.

Today, the unemployment gap between the college-educated black man and the college-educated white man is actually higher than 10 years ago.

Black males with college degrees are three times more likely to be unemployed. The college-educated black male has an unemployment rate of 5.6 percent, which is too high for the national average, which is now over 7 percent, and certainly far too high for any group of college graduates to be so unproductive.

This demographic group is also disproportionately characterized by social and judicial problems.

In 1987, 49 black males per thousand—and that's a very high figure—were victims of crime or violence.

Evidence indicates that black males receive longer sentences than their white counterparts who have committed the same crime.

Given this trend, it should be less than surprising that the number of young black males under the control of the criminal justice system exceeds those in the age group who are enrolled in college.

This is an outrageous situation.

Crime is only one output of this complex situation.

Unemployed and imprisoned black males do not get married and build families.

In 1988, for example, 45 percent of the female-headed families with children were unemployed or not in the labor force.

Over a 20-year period, 1970 to 1990, the proportion of black families with children under 18 headed by two parents dropped from 64 percent of all families with children to 39 percent.

However, there's another side to all of these statistics.

Approximately 50 percent of black males have wives and families.

Another 75 percent of those aged 20 to 29 have had no serious encounters with the law.

Of the approximately 2.6 million black males in the age group 16 to 24, who are not enrolled in school, 56 percent are gainfully employed.

In other words, the complete story of black males in this country is not one of total failure.

It is toward these success stories that public policymakers must look, if we're to frame policies to reduce those environmental factors which threaten the growth and development of future generations of young black males.

As we look back to see the policies that help black Americans in general, and black males in particular, we can take satisfaction.

For, in spite of charges to the contrary, numerous programs have worked.

I think, now, Mr. Chairman, it's time for the Nation to turn its concerns to the disadvantages born with each black male child.

Finally, I'd like to submit, for the record, a background paper prepared for us by the Twenty-First Century Commission on African-American Males entitled "From Consternation to Conservation: Towards a National Policy for the Preservation of Black Males."

I'll put that in the record, Mr. Chairman.

# From Consternation to Conservation
# Towards A National Policy
# For The Preservation
# of Black Males

Prepared by:
The Commission on
African-American Males

The development of a national policy regarding Black males is perhaps surprising. Given the comprehensiveness of the public agenda, why direct policy toward a special population? In particular, why discuss such an issue when Americans and their policymakers are seeking to identify strategies which will enhance the possibility of permanent world peace? Why add the issues of Black males to a domestic agenda already loaded with problems seeking solution. The data are well-known? Gross National Product decreased by 2.1% or $22.4 billion in the fourth quarter of 1990.[1] Company profits before taxes actually decreased for the second quarter in a row.[2] And, of course, consumer prices in 1990 increased by 6.1% - the greatest annual increase since the 8.9% rise in 1981.[3] Moreover, the unemployment rate for the labor force has reached 6.2%.[4]

But these domestic areas of concern are only short-run. This Congress remains concerned about America's international competitiveness, budget reduction strategies, and an array of other issues. Again, one logically interposes the question, "Why now on the Black male issue?" Or more pointedly, "Why can't this Black male thing wait?" And the consternation begins . . . .

## I. Black Males and International Competitiveness

As one reflects on so very legitimate a question, it becomes clear that interwoven into each major domestic issue are matters of priority which implicitly and/or explicitly involve Black males. We are proud of America's victory in the Persian Gulf. However, though Black males are only 5% of the population 17.4% of all active duty personnel in the military consists of Black males. Thus, Black males were intricately involved in the visible world display of the United States' continued strength as a world military power.[5]

But the country is yet to demonstrate its continued dominance as an economic power. Dominance in this area will, of course, require substantial investments in the future and current labor force. And while Black Americans currently comprise only 5%-6% of the civilian labor force they, along with other minorities, are projected to comprise 57% of the new labor market entrants in the year 2000.[6] Since the labor force is now growing at only one-half of the annual rate (1.2%) which it experienced during the seventies (2.4%), Black American males are essential to a strong work force.

But will Black American males still constitute such a significant population of the work force in the year 2000? Existing data are startling regarding the future survival of this key segment of the population. Black males have the lowest life expectancy of any other group within the United States. Furthermore, their life expectancy is actually declining. In 1970, Black males had a mere life expectancy of 60 years. This number was 15 years below the life expectancy of white females, 13 years less than Black females, and 8 years less than white males. In 1984, this gap had narrowed some and Black males could expect to live to be 65 years. However, since 1988, the life expectancy of Black males has dropped to slightly less than 65 years.[7] However, this lowered life expectancy is not a function of an elevated death rate among older males. Rather, it is linked to a higher death rate for Black males in their most productive years. The death rate from homicide, for example, for Black males ages 25-34 is almost 5 times as high as for Black females (108 vs. 21.9), 7.4 times as high as for white males (108 vs. 14.6), and 24 times as high as the rate for white females (108 vs. 4.4).[8] Similar but less startling patterns exist for deaths from accidents. These rates of death are shocking. Such a casual loss of human lives must be stopped for humanistic reasons. Secondarily, however, this loss of life reduces Gross National Product and economic efficiency.

Economic efficiency is also reduced by the fact that the economy underutilizes and undercompensates those Black men who are participating or seeking to participate in the economy. This trend also reduces international competitiveness.

It is sad to say that even in 1991, Black males still encounter difficulties in the job market. In the fourth quarter of 1990, for example, Black males had an unemployment rate of 19% relative to 7.8% for white males. Black teenage males had an unemployment rate of 48% vs. 25.9% for White teenage males.[9] Furthermore, Black males, though only 5% of the work force, comprise nearly 20% of discouraged workers, those persons who had dropped out of the work force because they believed that jobs could not be found.

Now most of the public and, probably, a majority of policymakers, would be quick to charge that these high rates of unemployment reflect the educational difference between Black males and their white counterparts. However, this is not always the case. In fact, it is somewhat startling that the unemployment gap between college educated Black and white men is actually higher today than 10 years ago. In 1979, Black males with college degrees were unemployed 2 1/2 times as often as their white counterparts. Today, that difference has grown to three times the rate of white males.[10] Thus, the unemployment rate for Black male college graduates - 5.6% - was higher than that of any other gender/ethnic group.

In fact, this rate was higher than that of white male high school graduates! Given the expensive resources which go into the production of a college degree, an unemployment rate of 5.6% for any group of college graduates is unproductive and hurts the nation as a whole.

But the statistics regarding unemployment are part of a larger and even more threatening trend. Our nation desperately needs college trained workers to regain our competitive status in the world economy. Labor market projections indicate that by the year 2000, 27% of the jobs will require a four year college degree. However, 31% of Black males who currently hold college degrees are working in occupations for which no college degree is required - administrative support, production and crafts, etc. Only 14% of white male college graduates hold such positions.[11] Again, these patterns represent a tremendous loss of economic productivity for the country as a whole.

This pattern of the unproductive and inefficient use of Black male college graduates hurts the country in a far more powerful, yet subtle way. Black male college graduates, like their white counterparts, inadvertently become role models for youths within their communities. Thus, the educational aspirations of future generations are reduced when males with college degrees are employed in the same occupations as their counterparts who do not hold college degrees.[12]

Such a point becomes particularly relevant as one reviews college enrollment figures for Black males. Although 11% of Black males (but only 10.4% of Black females) age 25 and over have completed college degrees, Black male college enrollment levels peaked in 1986 when 590,000 Black males were enrolled in college. By 1988, however, only 494,000 (or 37%)

of the 1,321,000 Black students in college were males. This represented a 16.3% decrease in Black male college enrollment over a 4 year period.[13] While a number of factors contributed to this trend, some preliminary research has indicated that some young Black males may have, based upon casual observation, begun to question the value of a college degree.[14] Again, such a trend can reduce the competitiveness of the overall economy.

## II. Black Males, Black Families and Deficit Reduction: Some Complex Issues

The economic disparities which characterize the labor market position of Black males are not benign. Policymakers have been, for the last several decades, cognizant of the fact that employment related problems create psycho-social pathologies. That is, we know that males who are unemployed are disproportionately more likely to commit homicide and/or suicide. The stresses related to unemployment elevate the probability that a given individual will become a substance abuser. Cases of domestic violence also increase during periods of high unemployment. Although policymakers became acutely aware of these relationships through the detailed and comprehensive work of Harvey Brenner of Johns Hopkins University, such knowledge is not new. Historical accounts of London and/or Paris during periods of economic stress are reminiscent of the accounts of "pathological behavior" which are associated with urban centers today, i.e., murders, robberies, assaults, thefts, etc.

Black males experience greater economic problems. Thus, it is not at all surprising that this demographic group is disproportionately characterized by social pathologies. As mentioned earlier, Black males are unemployed at 2 1/2 times the rate of their white male counterparts. They experience a longer duration of unemployment - Black males are three times more likely than white males to have been unemployed for 15 weeks or longer. They are also 34% more likely to have been fired from a job. For young Black males, the data are even more staggering.[15]

And these labor market asymmetries do translate into psycho-social "pathologies." Of even greater consequence, Black males are disproportionately victims of crimes, additionally, they are disproportionately crime victimizers. In 1987, for example, 49.1 Black males per thousand persons were victims of crimes of violence relative to 31.5 Black females, 35 white males and 20.1 white females. For younger Black males, these rates were even higher. Nearly 91 crimes of violence per 1,000 persons were committed against Black males 12-15 years of age. The rate for those Black males 16-19 years of age was even higher, 101 per 1,000 persons.[16] Interestingly, many of these crimes were committed by Black men against Black men. In 1988, for example, 51.5% of all murders and homicides of Black males were committed by other Black males.

Existing evidence indicates, however, that Black males, if arrested for a crime are more likely to be convicted, sentenced and jailed. This tendency emerges because many persons have come to associate Black males with criminal behavior. In 1985, for example, Black males comprised 23.2% of the arrests for all crimes. By 1988, 29.6% of the total number of arrests for all crimes involved Black males. However, Black males comprised in the subsequent periods 45%-48% of all inmates in federal, state and local prisons and jails.[17] Evidence also indicates that Black males receive longer sentences than their white counterparts who have committed the same crime. Given this trend, it should be less than shocking that the number of young Black males under the control of the criminal justice system may possibly exceed those in this age group who are enrolled in college.

As one reviews the data, it becomes clear that whole institutional systems are interacting in a way that is detrimental to Black males. Our labor markets are not providing comparable returns to this population even when they pursue the American dream. And it is not clear from available evidence that our criminal justice system is dealing fairly with this population segment. However, longer sentences and more convictions do not only punish Black males. Taxpayers are the ones who pay the costs. The justice system's direct expenditures totalled nearly $61 billion in 1988.[18] But these expenses were for the justice system itself. Total operating costs for all state and federal prisons were $14,851,556,347. The overall cost of building new prisons per bed averages $53,663. In 1988 alone, 18 states built new prisons to house only 16,914 inmates. The total cost of these new facilities was $1,086,954,748.[19] These costs are staggering.

But crime is only one outcome of this complex situation. Low income, and/or unemployed, and/or imprisoned Black males do not get married and build families. While there are direct and immediate socio-economic costs which accrue from low rates of family formation, additional problems emerge because of issues surrounding the inter-generational transfer of weak labor market skills. Let me explore this issue for a moment.

For both Black and white Americans, the number of children living in single family households has increased. In 1975, only 16% of children lived in a single family households. By 1988, however, the figure had grown to 22%. And in 1990, nearly one-fourth of all families lived in single family households. The economic status of single parent families is, however, often precarious. In 1988, for example, approximately 45% of female heading families with children were unemployed or not in the labor force. A similar but less severe situation applied to single male headed households with children. More than 21% of single fathers with children were unemployed. Additionally, household incomes were substantially lower for single females and males than for their married counterparts.

In the twenty year period from 1970 to 1990, the proportion of Black families with children under 18 headed by two parents dropped from 64.3% of all families with children to 39.4% - a decrease of more than 38 percent. While the overwhelming proportion of these single parent families were headed by females (56.2%), approximately 4.3% were headed by single Black males.[20] In fact, the number of single family households with children headed by white males (3.8%) was actually lower than the rate for Black males (4%). Approximately 23% of the single Black male families with children were headed by Black males who have never been married. Again the disproportionate number of Black females headed families with children also places a financial and economic strain upon the nation. Moreover, the household may be less likely to invest time and money into the human capital development of the children. Such a possibility holds implications for the labor force of the future.

## III. Policy Implication

The range of problems which relate to Black males extend beyond the economic and the familial. Black males die from almost all major diseases at a rate which exceeds all other demographic groups. Black males are more likely to suffer from work-related disabilities than any other group. Black males disproportionately die from AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome), and the litany of statistics continues....

Now all of this data does help. We need to have an accurate portrait of the range of problems which face Black males. We need to recognize that in our great country in the year 1991, a number of factors elevate the odds that a Black male child born today will be unemployed, a crime victim or victimizer, and/or a death statistic.

But there is another side to all of this madness. Approximately 50% of Black males have wives and/or families. Another 75% of those age 20-29 have had no serious encounters with the law. Of the approximately 2.6 million Black males in the age group 16-24 who are not enrolled in school, 56% are gainfully employed.[21] In other words, the complete story of Black males in this country is not one of failure. The level of success exceeds the level of failure. It is towards these success stories that public policymakers must look if we are to frame policies to reduce those environmental factors which threaten the growth and development of future generations of young Black males. And, as we look backwards to see what policies helped Black Americans in general, and Black males in particular, we must smile in delight, for in spite of charges to the contrary, numerous of our programs worked. Additionally, as we look around we see low cost partnerships between government, industry, and community groups which have been successful in ameliorating the problems of Black males. Let's just briefly review some of these programs.

First, sufficient research indicates that poverty breeds crime and other socially dysfunctional behaviors. Poverty correlates with fewer doctor visits, disease, and early mortality. Through the various antipoverty programs of the past decades, poverty across Black households dropped from 55.1% of the Black population in 1959 to approximately 31% today. This represents a 43% decrease.

Second, through government assistance for all levels of education, the educational status of Black males and their families rapidly accelerated as a direct consequence of federal intervention. In 1970, the white dropout rate was 10.8% in the age group 14 to 24. In 1988, it was still 10.8%. No special attrition programs had been targeted towards this group. A wide range of programs were targeted towards Black youth. Consequently, the dropout rate decreased by approximately 45% - from 22.2% in 1970 to 12.4% in 1988.[22]

Third, the government more recently "demarketed" single family households and teen pregnancy by redrafting and reframing public assistance programs. These efforts were successful. From 1970 to 1980, Black single family households had grown by 6.1% and white single parents had increased by 5.7%. From 1980 to 1990, however, the growth among both groups slowed significantly. Black single family households grew by 3.8% instead of the previous decade's 6.1%. White single family households increased by 3.1% rather than the prior 5.87% of the seventies. Public intervention efforts worked. The few examples cited are far from exhaustive. Evaluation results indicate that hearings such as these and the resultant strategies have effectively ameliorated a broad range of socio-economic problems.

Let's turn, though, specifically to the problems confronting Black males. What are some policy directions that are suggested by existing theory and data? Some of these can be briefly summarized:

1. First, the data suggest that many problems facing Black males are employment related. Now, its been a long time since policymakers have used the term "full-employment" in policy discussions. But macroeconomic traumas which aggregate unemployment do disproportionately reduce the employment levels of Black males. Moreover, when "normalcy" returns, Black males are not fully restored to employment. Even Black Veterans are unemployed at 1.7 times the rate of white veterans. We have got to think about generating higher levels of employment in urban as well as in suburban areas.[23]
2. Secondly, we must retain policies which will keep labor markets operating in a nondiscriminatory fashion. Engineers are needed and will be needed even more in the year 2000. But Black engineers are unemployed at 3 times the rate of white engineers. To use a cliche, Black males must know that when they do prepare themselves, the "gates of opportunity will be open."
3. Third, but of equal importance, as policymakers we must provide full support to employment and training programs. While some of the existing programs may need reshaping so that they train persons for jobs that will be available on into the future, evaluation studies

have shown that even the much maligned Jobs Corps improved the work habits of its participants.

4. Fourth, we must carefully tailor our education strategies so that the decision to participate in higher education is made more attractive. Black families have, on average, low family incomes. Accordingly, Black families are slightly more dependent upon aid from federal sources relative to their white counterparts. Although 16.1% of Black students in college work full-time, relative to 12.4% of white students, the economic costs of college are sometimes prohibitive.[24] Studies of attrition have indicated that economic factors are cited as a major cause of dropout for Black males.

5. Fifth, we must enter some new territories and systematically coordinate partnerships between the various sectors of the society. Social support groups, mentor/mentee relationships can be proliferated with sufficient coordination and support.

These hearings, then, represent a statement that policymakers recognize the importance of structuring a new relationship between Black males and the larger society.

## ENDNOTES

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5. United States General Accounting Office, Fact Sheet For The Chairman, Military Personnel: Composition of The Active Duty Force By Race or National Origin, pg. 17.
6. See, Watson, Betty J., et al., "Human Resource Planning in the Year 2000: Implications For Public and Private Planning," forthcoming Afro-American Scholarship, May, 1991.
7. U.S. National Center for Health Statistics, Vital Statistics of the United States, 1990.
8. Percentages calculated from data found in Black Americans: A Statistical Sourcebook, 1990, pg. 63.
9. National Urban League Research Department, Quarterly Economic Report on the African American Worker, Report No. 26, Dec., 1990, pg. 3.
10. Meisenheimer, "Black College Graduates in the Labor Market, 1979 and 1989", Monthly Labor Review, Vol. 113, No. 1, Nov., 1990, pgs. 13-21.
11. Ibid.
12. Black Americans, op. at pg. 148.
13. U.S. Bureau of the Census, Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1990, Table No. 254, pg. 152.

14. Watson, Betty J., *Conversations With Black Male College Dropouts* (work in progress).

15. Quarterly Economic Report, op. cit.

16. Garwood, Alfred, ed., *Black Americans: A Statistical Sourcebook*, 1990 Edition, pg. 80.

17. *Ibid*.

18. *Ibid*.

19. U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Criminal Victimization in the United States*, 1987, pg. 16, Table 3; pg. 18, Table 6.

20. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Monthly Labor Review*, December 1989, "Research Summaries: Children in 2-Works Families and Real Family Income", pg. 48-52.

21. *Household Family Characteristics*, op. cit., pg. 7.

22. *Black Americans: A Statistical Sourcebook*, pg. 241, Table 6.18.

23. *Quarterly Report*, op. cit.

24. *Ibid*.

Senator SANFORD. I thank you, again, and all those who agreed to serve on the Commission, and all of those who have come to this hearing.

And I look forward to learning from the panelists.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Sanford.

Senator Garn?

## OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR GARN

Senator GARN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Today's hearing will investigate the situation of black males in our contemporary urban society.

Our witnesses will testify to problems faced by black males and what the ramifications of those problems are for our cities.

Black males are more likely to grow up in very difficult circumstances.

The general patterns of community support, educational and economic opportunities and family background enjoyed by many Americans are not enjoyed by many of our black youth.

Statistics confirm that black males are more likely to have low incomes, face violence and violent death, and grow up in nontraditional families than other demographic groups.

I want to emphasize that black males are not just a demographic group.

They are individuals, individual human beings who face individual circumstances and achieve individual outcomes.

It's a problem that we must address.

I'm certainly hopeful about a hearing such as this that we can gather information that will help us turn this very serious problem around in this country.

I want to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding the hearing.

And I want to thank Governor Wilder and some other very distinguished witnesses for being willing to meet here and testify today.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Garn.

Senator Shelby?

## OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR SHELBY

Senator SHELBY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I, too, am honored to be a member of the Twenty-First Century Commission on African-American Men.

I want to also commend Senator Sanford, my colleague, for organizing this Commission to address the problem of African-American males.

Mr. Chairman, I'm also encouraged to see such a diverse group of individuals involved in the work of the Commission here.

I can assure you that I'll do everything I can to assist the Commission in achieving its objectives.

We all know the problems of black males: high unemployment, incarceration, high dropout rates, drugs and poor health care, but we have not done much to resolve these problems.

The formation of the Commission is a step in the right direction.

I believe, also, Mr. Chairman, that education is the answer to many of the black males' problems.

We live right now in a highly advanced, technologically oriented world, with smart bombs and laser guided missiles that require an intelligent highly skilled work force.

The most rapidly growing jobs through the year 2000 will require relatively more education; not less.

But how do we keep black males in school?

That's a big problem.

The Urban League reports that black males are more likely to fall behind in their classes, as early as the elementary years.

It is my understanding that the black male child's poor performance in elementary school is often by choice, that is, it's not very macho to be smart.

Soon, all of the playing in class and failure to do homework catches up with the black male child, and he finds himself repeating grades.

He becomes frustrated that he is 12 or 13 in the fifth or sixth grade, or some similar scenario and subsequently drops out of school, and then we all lose.

When the black male drops out of school, we all pay a price because virtually he's giving up all hope of obtaining the American dream.

He is more likely to need unemployment compensation, public health care, welfare, and public housing.

The dropout problem is not limited to the large urban cities in the Northeast, Mr. Chairman.

For example, during the 1989-90 school year in Alabama, my State, 12,709 students dropped out of school.

Of this number, 2,600 black males dropped out, compared to only 1,928 black females.

So this trend continues at the postsecondary level.

All of the historically black colleges and universities in my State of Alabama have fewer black males enrolled in the freshman class than females.

For example, Alabama A&M University has 932 females enrolled in the freshman class, against 849 males.

Stillman College has 237 females and 97 males, Mr. Chairman.

Talladega College has 374 females and 203 males.

And Tuskegee University has 676 females in its freshman class and 625 males.

Mr. Chairman, I believe we must intervene, early, to keep black males in school by providing strong role models and stressing academic achievement and discipline and values.

Teachers must develop instructional programs to accommodate the black male child who often has very different needs.

In addition, the schools must work with the families and with the communities where these at risk black males reside to provide the special assistance needed, if we're to save them.

If we provide this special assistance to the black male child, I believe he will not be one of the 609,000 black males who are in jail or on parole or on probation.

He will not be included in the 58 percent of black males in the Alabama prison system.

In addition, early intervention should improve employment opportunities for black males.

Presently, the unemployment rate for black men in my State of Alabama is more than twice that of white men.

Finally, if we provide the role models, discipline and values needed by the black male child, I believe that he will want to be a husband and a father to his children.

The task that we face is enormous and will require considerable resources and commitment on the part of all Americans.

It is my hope, Mr. Chairman, that the work of this Commission will contribute substantially in developing a blueprint to achieve these objectives.

I encourage both the Congress and the administration to become more actively involved in finding solutions to this national crisis.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Shelby.

As we commence with our discussion today, and we're going to do this in roundtable fashion, and hear from our panelists and witnesses who are here today.

We're going to start with Governor Wilder, to ask that he make opening comments.

We're very interested in his testimony.

We'll make his whole statement a part of the record.

And we'll call on Dorothy Height, also, after Governor Wilder.

Then we'll go back and forth around the room, because there's a wealth of insight and knowledge here.

And we're just so eager to hear it, and to share it with the American people, which this hearing will enable us to do.

With that, we're greatly honored to have the Governor of the State of Virginia with us today.

A man much admired, not only in the State that he heads, but also throughout this entire country.

We are just very pleased and proud to have you here.

We welcome your comments at this time.

## OPENING STATEMENT OF DOUGLAS L. WILDER, GOVERNOR, STATE OF VIRGINIA

Governor WILDER. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I join your colleagues in thanking you for convening this hearing.

I would say to Senator Sanford that we likewise appreciate your efforts relative to the conference that we're scheduling for sometime in May.

And I'm pleased to have this opportunity to be here this morning to share some of my thoughts and concerns relative to this issue, which is of tremendous importance, not just to my administration or my State, but to each of us in this room, and to the long-term vitality of this Nation.

The disappearing generation of young black males in America, to the extent that you recognize that there is a problem, that first step of confronting it, and come to understand what some of the solutions will and can be, is heartening.

Because, to ignore it, would be to our further risk.

Millions are vanishing.

Few are found in jobs with a promising future.

Few are found at the head of families that they father.

Disturbing numbers are behind bars in our penal institutions.

Others are subject to the criminal justice system.

Everyday, we still find more hiding behind crack, alcohol and crime, or lying on a table in the local morgue.

It's ironic that a great number of these same men and women who served this Nation so valiantly in our efforts to free Kuwait will be returning to this country, only to be caught in the crossfire of another war.

And I had no idea, when penning these lines, that Senator Riegle, you would be able to bring more graphically to us, that experience of the young man from Michigan who was gunned down after having been decorated in Kuwait.

Having survived thousands of miles away from home in order to come back home to that risk of losing his life.

Even as we speak now, across the Nation, from New York City to Detroit and Los Angeles, and to my native community in Richmond, VA, it's a war in which all too often, black Americans are victimizing and killing one another.

And although we've come far in recent years, in terms of race relations, I think it's very important that we not forget that it was not all that long ago when blacks and other minorities lived in the constant fear of those radical supremacists who openly talked of taking the lives of blacks, especially black males, because they dared to speak for their rights.

Sadly, yesterday's victim of violence, in many instances, has become today's wanton aggressor.

As a result of this transformation of roles, our children, our families, and our elderly and entire communities fear those hoodlums who think nothing of taking our money and, often, our lives to buy drugs, or merely to flaunt their machismo before their fellow terrorists of the streets.

I think it's only natural that we should be sickened when thinking of those stalwarts of freedom who endured the billyclubs and the firehoses of the 1950's and the 1960's only to see assault weapons and knives now turned inward.

Statistics for 1990 revealed that Richmond, VA, registered a record 114 homicides, of which 102 of the victims were black.

The average victim was 29 years of age, down from just 34 years of age 4 years ago.

In fully two-thirds of these cases, a black took the life of another black person.

Nationally, black men in inner city neighborhoods are less likely to reach the age of 65 than men in Bangladesh, one of the poorest nations in the world.

Approximately one in every four young black American males between the ages of 20 and 29 is behind bars, on probation or on parole.

And although an alarming number of young males are having extreme difficulty staying clear of the law and making a future for themselves through long hours of hard work and honest work, millions are having no problem whatsoever making babies.

In fact, the out of wedlock birthrate for blacks has doubled in the last 20 years.

In 1960, 50 percent of all black men and women between 15 and 44 were married.

By the late 1980's, that percentage dropped to 30 percent.

It's difficult, indeed, to encourage young people to deal with the turmoil beyond their homes, when so much anarchy and uncertainty wreaks havoc within the confines of their own homes, within those same walls.

In light of today's litany of interrelated crises affecting the black male, I believe it imperative that we redouble our efforts to provide our young people with the knowledge and the access to opportunities that they so desperately and rightfully need to break from the vicious cycle of drugs, dropouts, unemployment, teen pregnancy, and violent crime.

Obviously, the private and the public sectors must work in tandem to successfully address these, as well as related crises of the day.

There's no such thing as a black male problem or a black family problem.

The dilemmas are before us to not exist in a vacuum.

They are part and parcel of the American character, a thread running throughout the fabric of the American society.

If we sit back and allow that thread to become further unraveled, young black males will not be the only citizens of this Nation bearing the massive long-term costs and the consequences of that inertia.

If we are to make the black home stable and productive, we must make the job market open and promising.

Yet, we know that black males are not full participants in the American labor market; far from it.

The unemployment rate for black males is 12.2 percent, as compared to 5.5 percent for white Americans.

In Michigan, Illinois, and Washington, black unemployment rates exceed 17 percent.

In Wisconsin, those rates exceed 20 percent.

Moreover, today, we find the income earning gaps between black males and white American males with college degrees is widening, as has been indicated, rather than narrowing.

In major urban areas, it has been estimated that as many as 64 percent of black males who live in poverty areas of central cities are either underemployed, or not in the work force at all.

There are those who maintain that disparities in the private sector have resulted in the large numbers of minorities in our Armed Forces where there are some 400,000 strong.

Not maintaining the various motivations of joining the Armed Forces, if an anticipated down scaling occurs in the near future, as a result of cuts in military expenditures, I don't see how anyone can truthfully state that our Nation is prepared for the reintegration of large numbers of minority service men and women into the private sector.

At this hour, all the harrowing statistics aside, the critical inquiry is, not how bad are things for black males in American society; rather, the key question is, what positive courses of action are within our grasp and can be brought within our grasp over time, to significantly improve upon these conditions.

While our country continues to rightfully celebrate our victory in the Persian Gulf, it's now time to begin turning our attention to the rights and the freedoms of Americans, all Americans.

We have successfully waged a war against aggression and oppression in the sands of the Middle East.

Now America must wage a war for equality and opportunity on the homefront.

Congress and the White House can fire the opening salvo in this noble effort by passing the Civil Rights Act of 1991.

Congress showed its willingness to stand on the frontlines last year.

For the sake of this and future generations of Americans, I'm hopeful that the White House will, this time, see fit to sign that legislation once it's passed, because you send mixed signals, again, to Americans when we say to them that we are prepared to fight, to shed blood, to lose lives, for the freedoms and the opportunities of others, but we must continue to engage in a 400-year-old debate when it comes to speaking to the rights and privileges of Americans.

For all the good that Government can do to promote greater equality and access to opportunities, that is not to suggest that Government should attempt or could attempt to do it all, because you and I know that Government can't do it all.

The private sector and private citizens across this Nation must be active participants in the long-term processes by which people are afforded the greater means and the skills which will be needed to improve their condition.

In Virginia, I'm very pleased to say that we have launched a thorough reorganization and reconceptualization of the relationship between Government and the provision of services, especially in the area of education.

It is my hope that our efforts to streamline Government by eliminating unnecessary bureaucracy and wasteful spending, will result in the emergence of a new understanding of the importance of openminded approaches to solving problems, the use of extensive public-private partnerships, and the importance of lessening dependencies upon government.

Government must set the example for those persons of limited means by living within its limited means.

Nationwide, elected leaders, business leaders, religious organizations, and private citizens must come together to create a matrix of leadership and creativity, which is needed to effectively intervene in what has become, and is now, a national disgrace.

The solutions to the multifaceted crisis of the black male must likewise be multifaceted in nature.

For every young black male that we can keep out of prison, for every one that we can keep out of the slaughter house of drug abuse, for every one that we can keep in the classroom, for every one that we can put in the work force, for every one that we can enlighten to the value and necessity of becoming a productive, conscientious citizen, America, as a whole, will be that much better off.

This generation of Americans must commit itself to focusing ample attention and resources, private and public alike, on the plight of the young black male.

For, in doing so, we will not merely be tackling what can only be termed, a national disaster.

Of equal importance, we will be improving upon the potential for the growth and the vitality of America's gross national product.

By saving the future of some Americans, we can vouchsafe of the future of all Americans.

And it is in this context that the bipartisan Twenty-First Century Commission on African-American Males was formed, as a national conference on the status of African-American males.

The conference seeks to bring civic leaders, educators, corporate and foundation representatives, elected officials and policymakers together, to discuss the problems of the African-American male, and to work toward finding solutions to those problems.

The 3-day conference, as was indicated by the convener, will have 11 panels addressing such issues as education, health care, African-American family life, employment, and drugs.

Panels will include Federal and State policymakers, as well as noted scholars, civic leaders, educators, and representatives from African-American organizations.

Following the conference, there will be a series of Commission meetings, to gather facts, and to present findings that could be incorporated into proposed legislation.

We don't convene this conference for the purpose of assigning or avoiding blame.

Rather, it will be an opportunity for structuring what we can do on the strength of our commitment and the clarity of our shared vision.

It is my sincere hope that this conference will result in an opportunity for the rethinking of the ways that we approach and understand the seemingly endless litany of predicaments which tragically continue to vex an appallingly large segment of the American population.

The role of the members of this committee toward achieving these ends cannot be gainsaid.

Again, I want to thank those of you here for your time, and I look forward to working together in the coming months, as we endeavor to make this conference a success, and to make this generation of Americans worthy of our forebearers as well as our posterity.

Thank you.

[Excerpts from opening statement follow:]

# EXCERPTS FROM REMARKS MADE BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS

9:45 A.M.
MARCH 19, 1991
WASHINGTON, D.C.
BY
GOVERNOR L. DOUGLAS WILDER

Good morning, Chairman Riegle, Members of the Subcommittee.

I am pleased to have this opportunity to be with you this morning and to be afforded this time to share some of my thoughts and concerns regarding an issue which is of tremendous importance to my administration, to each of us in this room, and to the long-term vitality of this nation....the disappearing generation of young black males in America.

Millions are vanishing: few are found in jobs with a promising future; few are found at the head of families they father.

Disturbing numbers are behind bars in our penal institutions. Every day, we find still more hiding behind crack, alcohol and crime; or lying on a table in the local morgue.

It is ironic that a great many of the same men and women who served this nation so valiantly in our efforts to free Kuwait....will be returning to this country only to be caught in the cross-fire of another war, one which rages---even as I speak---in streets across this nation....from New York City; to Detroit; to Los Angeles; to my native community of Richmond, Virginia.

It's a war in which all too often black Americans are victimizing and killing one another.

Although this nation has come far in recent years in terms of race relations, it is important that we not forget that it was not all that long ago when blacks and other minorities lived in the constant fear of those radical supremacists who openly talked of taking the lives of blacks, especially black males, because they dared to speak for their rights.

Sadly, yesterday's victim of violence---in many instances---has become today's wanton aggressor.

As a result of this transformation of roles, our children, our families, our elderly and entire communities fear those hoodlums who think nothing of taking our money (and, often, our lives)...to buy drugs....or merely to flaunt their machismo before their fellow terrorists of the streets.

It is only natural that we should be sickened when thinking of those stalwarts of freedom who endured the billy clubs and the firehoses of the fifties and the sixties....only to see assault weapons and knives now turned inward.

Statistics for 1990 revealed that Richmond registered a record 114 homicides ... of which 102 victims were black. The average victim was 29 years old ... down from 34 just four years ago. In fully two-thirds of these cases, a black took the life of another black person.

Nationally, black men in inner city neighborhoods are less likely to reach the age of 65 than men in Bangladesh, one of the poorest nations in the world.

Approximately 1 in every 4 young black American males between the ages of 20 and 29 is behind bars, on parole, or on probation.

And although an alarming number of young males are having extreme difficulty staying clear of the law---and making a future for themselves through long hours of hard, honest work---millions are having no problem whatsoever making babies.

In fact, the out-of-wedlock birthrate for blacks has doubled in the last 20 years.

In 1960, 50% of all black men and women between 15 and 44 were married. By the late 1980's that percentage dropped....to 30%.

It is difficult indeed to encourage young people to deal with the turmoil beyond their homes....when so much anarchy and uncertainty wreaks havoc within the confines of those walls.

In light of today's litany of inter-related crises affecting the black male, I believe it imperative that we redouble our efforts to provide our young people with the knowledge and the access to opportunities that they so desperately need to break free from the vicious cycle of drugs, drop-outs, unemployment, teen pregnancy and violent crime.

Obviously, the private and public sectors must work in tandem if we are to successfully address these and related crises of the day. There's no such thing as a "black male problem" or a "black family problem."

The dilemmas before us do not exist in a vacuum; they are part and parcel of the American character, a thread running throughout the fabric of American society. If we sit back and allow that thread to become unravelled, young black males will not be the only citizens of this nation bearing the massive long-term costs and consequences of that inertia.

If we are to make the black home stable and productive, we must make the job market open and promising.

And yet, we know black males are not full participants in the American labor market.....far from it.

The unemployment rate for black males is 12.2%....as compared to 5.5% for white Americans. In Michigan, Illinois and Washington, black unemployment rates exceed 17%. In Wisconsin, those rates exceed 20%.

Moreover, today, we find that the income earning gap between black males and white American males with college degrees is widening....rather than narrowing.

In major urban areas it has been estimated that as many as 64% of black males who live in poverty areas of central cities are either underemployed or not in the workforce at all.

There are those who maintain that disparities in the private sector have resulted in the large numbers of minorities in our armed forces -- where they are 400,000 strong.

Notwithstanding the various motivations for joining the armed forces, if an anticipated downscaling occurs in the near future as a result of cuts in military expenditures, I do not see how anyone can truthfully state that this nation is prepared for the reintegration of large numbers of minority service men and women into the private sector.

At this hour---all the harrowing statistics aside---the critical inquiry is not "How bad are things for black males in American society?" Rather, the key question is, "What positive courses of action are within our grasp---or can be brought within our grasp over time---to significantly improve upon these conditions?"

While our country continues to rightfully celebrate our victory in the Persian Gulf, it is time to now begin turning our attention to the rights and freedoms of Americans. We have successfully waged a war against aggression and oppression in the sands of the Middle East. Now, America must wage a war for equality and opportunity on the homefront.

Congress and the White House can fire the opening salvo in this noble effort by passing the Civil Rights Act of 1991. Congress showed its willingness to stand on the front lines last year; for the sake of this and future generations of Americans, the White House cannot be allowed to go AWOL again this year.

For all the good that government can do to promote greater equality and access to opportunities, that is not to suggest that government should attempt to do it all....because you and I know that government can't do it all.

Rather, the private sector and private citizens across the nation must be active participants in this long-term process by which people are afforded the greater means and skills needed to improve their condition.

In Virginia, I'm proud to say that my administration has launched a thorough reorganization and reconceptualization of the relationship between government and the provision of services, especially in the area of education.

It is my hope that our efforts to streamline government by eliminating unnecessary bureaucracy and wasteful spending will result in the emergence of a "new understanding" of the importance of open-minded approaches to solving problems; the use of extensive public/private partnerships; and the importance of lessening dependence upon government.

Government must set the example for those persons of limited means....by living within its limited means.

Nationwide, elected leaders, business leaders, religious organizations, and private citizens must come together to create a matrix of leadership and creativity needed to effectively intervene in what has become a national disgrace.

The solutions to the multi-faceted crisis of the black male must likewise be multi-faceted in nature.

For every young black male that we can keep out of prison;

for every one we can keep out of the slaughterhouse of drug abuse;

for every one we can keep in the classroom;

for every one we can put in the workforce;

for every one we can enlighten to the value and necessity of becoming a productive, conscientious citizen....America as a whole will be that much better off.

This generation of Americans must commit itself to focusing ample attention and resources (private and public alike) on the plight of the young black male.

For in doing so, we will not merely be tackling what can only be termed a gross national disaster; of equal importance, we will be increasing the potential for the growth and vitality of America's Gross National Product.

By saving the future of some Americans, we can vouchsafe for the future of all Americans.

It is in this context that the bipartisan 21st Century Commission on African-American males was formed as a national conference on the status of African-American males.

The Conference seeks to bring civic leaders, educators, corporate and foundation representatives, elected officials and policy makers together to discuss the problems of the African-American male and to work towards finding solutions to those problems.

The three day Conference will have eleven panels addressing such issues as education, health care, African-American family life, employment and drugs. Panels will include federal and state policy makers, as well as noted scholars, civic leaders, educators and representatives from African-American organizations.

Following the Conference there will be a series of Commission meetings to gather facts and present findings that could be incorporated into proposed legislation.

We do not convene this conference for the purpose of assigning or avoiding blame; rather, it will be an opportunity for structuring what can be done on the strength of our commitment and the clarity of our shared vision.

It is my sincere hope that this conference will result in an opportunity for rethinking the way we approach and understand the seemingly endless litany of predicaments which tragically continue to vex an appallingly large segment of the American population.

The role of the members of this Committee toward achieving these ends cannot be gainsaid.

Again, I thank you for your time, and look forward to working together in the coming months, as we endeavor to make this conference a success....and to make this generation worthy of our forbears and posterity alike.

The **Chairman**. Thank you very much, Governor Wilder.

I'm struck, as you speak, by many thoughts, the foremost of which is that you are here today as the first black elected Governor in our entire country, which is a tremendous tribute to you.

But it also, I think, says, in another way, where are all the other Governors that we might be electing, that we might elect, but for the kinds of problems that we're talking about today.

And so your testimony and your leadership is so important to us and to this country.

And I take great meaning from what you say today, and from you, personally.

You're an inspiration to me and, to people across this country.

To have you with us, inspiring us in this fashion, is of great importance in our work here.

If I may just make one other personal observation.

I had the occasion, not too long ago, to visit the Black History Museum in Detroit.

There is, among other things in that museum, the drawing of a slave ship.

And it shows the floor plan of the inside of that ship where people who had been captured in Africa and taken into human bondage and were being brought across the ocean to be sold as slaves, there was a space marked out on the floor where each one had to lie, side by side, because every square inch of the floor of the bottom of that ship was covered with people who had been captured and taken prisoner.

To see that scene, and to imagine the meaning and the horror of what must have happened to families, in this instance, in Africa, who were literally invaded and ripped apart and taken away.

They also described in the course of that particular exhibit, how the children would be sold off first.

Those that were the sickest and ailing would be thrown off the ship, regardless of family relationships or anything of that kind, as the ships then made their way on up the coast of the United States.

I do not know that anyone, and I do not know that any white person can begin to understand the meaning of that history and how family patterns which were so strong in African nations were just literally ripped apart by that system of slavery and human bondage.

Obviously there are vestiges of that history that are present today in this dilemma beyond maybe even our power to comprehend, but I must say it is so important that we understand where we have come from, and it is so important that we understand some context of the history of the savagery of the way individuals in our Nation have been treated, to bring about much of what we find today.

I just wanted to make that observation, because it came to my mind as you were speaking.

Senator Domenici was here a moment ago.

I want to be sure that we include any comments he wants to make at this time.

Senator D'Amato has joined us.

Senator D'Amato.

## OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR D'AMATO

Senator D'AMATO. Mr. Chairman, yes, let me commend you first of all for this hearing, because obviously it touches on one of the core problems that we have.

If there is any way we can develop a greater appreciation of the problem of methodologies, whatever—Governor, it is very, very good to see you—of how we can do a better job in creating opportunities, real opportunities and providing real employment, our country really needs this.

Our cities find themselves with two distinct communities, unfortunately.

We may not want to say that, or recognize it, but that is the case, and it is not getting better.

So I want to applaud the chairman for delving into an area that has great sensitivity and great volatility also attached to it, and it will take some courage to attempt to come up and develop some plans that we can begin to work on.

Maybe that is a big, grandiose program that never brings us anything but controversy, but what positive steps can we begin to undertake to turn this situation around?

I am very much interested.

Hopefully, this will be the beginning, Mr. Chairman, the Governor, and those who have joined us, the beginning of a process that can begin at least to tackle this problem.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator D'Amato.

In the spirit of the kind of roundtable presentations and discussions that we want to have, I will call on Dorothy Height who is with us, and who serves as the president of the National Council of Negro Women.

We are delighted to have you with us today.

You bring a very distinguished history and personal career of leadership.

We will be very interested to hear from you at this time.

## STATEMENT OF DOROTHY HEIGHT, PRESIDENT, NATIONAL COUNCIL OF NEGRO WOMEN, WASHINGTON, DC

Dr. HEIGHT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I am very honored, and I appreciate the opportunity to appear in this discussion.

I am pleased to know of the work of the Commission and look forward to what it will bring for all of us.

I represent the National Council of Negro Women, which is a coalition of 33 national organizations who have an outreach to 4 million women.

We are deeply concerned about the status of the urban black male.

This issue is not separate from the issue of the black family.

The black family is the foundation that nurtures achievement, provides support, enhances self-esteem, shapes our ideals and goals, and tempers behavior.

It is indeed a fact that black families need black men who are healthy, employed, and productive.

We also need black women who are healthy, employed, and productive.

And today, as more and more children, youth, and families internalize the mores of the drug culture, we are beginning to see change in the nature of African-American families.

We know the root cases, but causality is one thing and responsibility another.

Therefore, we must take the responsibility for urging our national leadership to address these root causes.

We are pleased to see that there will be a Commission leading us in that effort.

We simply cannot continue to blame the victims.

We cannot afford to lose a generation of black men. Individually and collectively, through every organizational and congressional channel, we need to call upon the historic traditions and values of the African-American heritage.

The importance of family, strong kinship ties, the need for individual enterprise, hard work, self-help, and a thirst for education and faith are values that have been fundamental to the survival of African Americans.

The current socioeconomic status of black men has had a direct and adverse effect upon black family life.

Let me summarize just a few trends, some of which have already been mentioned:

In 1990, slightly more than 50 percent of all black families were two-parent families.

As recently as 1960, 73 percent of black families were headed by married couples. These figures correlate very strongly with unemployment rates.

And although black male unemployment was still nearly twice as high as white males in the 1960's, black male unemployment hovered around 8 percent.

And in some of our cities, the unemployment of black males, particularly the young, ranges from 40 to 60 percent.

During the 1970's and early 1980's, black male unemployment rates were nearly always double-digit numbers—14.7 percent in 1975; 15.9 percent in 1981; 21 percent in 1983.

Subsequently, during this period we observed an accelerated increase in female-headed households.

I think one of the things that we really need to take into account is that, even among those young black males who are working, there is a great decrease in their earnings. That is something that sometimes is not really taken into consideration, a number of men who are yet within the working poor.

Female-headed households have grown even faster among those households with children.

In 1990, for example, 56 percent of all households were headed by the woman, and only 39 percent were headed by two parents.

Our studies show, particularly in the young, that where their earnings fall beneath the poverty level there is less and less tendency to marry.

It is interesting to note, however—and this is seldom noted—that 4.3 percent of black families with children are maintained by the father.

Approximately 3.8 percent of white families with children are maintained by the father.

I think as we look at this and see the total picture, we need to recognize that we have every evidence that black males seek to participate in the process of child rearing and of family development.

These figures represent aggregates.

In urban areas, even a smaller proportion of families have two parents in them.

Of the approximate 6.2 million black families living in metropolitan areas, only 3 million, or 48 percent, are married couple families.

In poverty areas in central cities, the number is even higher.

Families without a father in the home—and there are so many factors that have contributed to that; and I think one thing we need to bear in mind is, even as we have modified the welfare system, that it still favors the single parent—that families without a father in the home have many problems.

I would just like to mention a few.

In 1989, only 11.8 percent of black married couple families were poor, but 46 percent of all black female-headed families were poor.

Even as I say that, I have to say that we have many, many strong families headed by women, both black and white.

Poverty and institutional racism of course correlates with out-of-wedlock births with higher rates of crime and other asocial behaviors.

The economic problems of the black male affect all levels of families.

If you look at it, the data for black female college graduates are startling.

Approximately 12 percent of black female college graduates have husbands who are unemployed and/or out of the labor force.

That is in contrast with 7 percent of their white counterparts. And approximately 52 percent of white female college graduates, but only 28 percent of black female college graduates have husbands who earn above $700 a week.

The whole family is affected.

But I also think that the aspirations even of our young women, while we see them in colleges, those aspirations are affected because they look at the whole marriageable age, and their own prospects for the future.

We are indeed aware of the many factors which constrain black male development and consequently black family life.

We must take the responsibility for addressing these factors to ensure that black families have sufficient resources to build and help maintain safe communities, education, training, and employment at an adequate wage which are critical for the black male, and indeed for the black family.

Thank you very much.

[The complete prepared statement of Dorothy Height follows:]

# Urban Black Males
# and
# The Crisis in the Nuclear Family

I am Dr. Dorothy Height, President of the National Council for Negro Women.

I very much appreciate the opportunity to testify before the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs today. I am deeply concerned about the status of urban black males. The issue is not one that is separate from the issue of the black family. The black family is the foundation that nourishes achievement, provides support, enhances self esteem, shapes our ideals and goals and tempers behavior. It is indeed a fact that black families need black men who are healthy, employed and productive in our community and in society. We also need black women who are healthy, employed and productive.

Today, as more and more children, youth and families internalize the mores of the drug culture, we are beginning to see change in the nature of African American families. We know the root causes. But causality is one thing and responsibility is another. Therefore, we must take the responsibility for urging national leadership to address these root causes. We cannot continue to blame the victims.

We cannot afford to lose a generation of black men. Individually and collectively and through every organizational and Congressional channel, we need to call upon the historic traditions and values of the African American heritage. The importance of family, the need for individual enterprise, hard work, and the thirst for education are values that have been fundamental to the survival of African Americans. The current socio-economic status of Black men has had a direct and adverse effect upon Black family life. Let me summarize a few trends:

- In 1990, slightly more than 50% of all Black families were married couples. As recently as 1960, however, 73.6% of Black families were married couples.[1]
- These figures correlate very strongly with unemployment rates. Although Black male unemployment was still nearly twice as high as white males in the sixties, Black male unemployment hovered around 8%. 2
- However, during the seventies and early eighties Black male unemployment rates were nearly always double digit numbers-14.7% in 1975, 15.9% in 1981, 21% in 1983. Subsequently, during this period, we observed an accelerated increase in female headed households.[3]
- Female headed households have grown ever faster among those households with children. In 1990, for example, 56% of all households were headed by the mother only, and only 39% were headed by two parents.[4]
- It is interesting to note, however, that 4.3% of Black families with children are maintained by the father. (Approximately, 3.8% of white families with children are maintained by the father.) Thus, Black males do seek to participate in the process of child rearing.[5]
- Now, these figures represent aggregates. In urban areas, even a smaller proportion of families are of the married couple type. Of the approximate 6.2 million Black families living in metropolitan areas only 3 million or 48.4% are married couple families. In poverty areas in central cities, the number is even higher.[6]

Families without a father experience a number of problems which are far less common among families which include both parents:

- In 1989, only 11.8% of Black married couple families were poor but 46.5% of all Black female headed households were poor. (The figure for whites were 5% and 25.4% respectively.)[7]

- Poverty, of course correlates with out-of-wedlock births, higher rates of crime, and other socially dysfunctional behaviors.

The economic problems of the Black males affect Black families, not only those who are at or below the poverty line. For example, the data for Black female college graduates are startling:

- Approximately, 50% of Black college graduates have husbands who are not college graduates (relative to only 28% of white females).
- Approximately, 12% of Black female college graduates have husbands who are unemployed and/or out of the labor force (vs. 7% of their white counterparts).
- Approximately, 52% of white female college graduates but only 28% of Black female college graduates have husbands who earn above $700 per week.

We are, indeed aware of factors which constrain Black male development, and consequently black family life. Again, we must take the responsibility for addressing these factors to ensure that black families have sufficient resources to build and maintain safe communities.

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1. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Household and Family Characteristics: March 1990 and 1989, Series, P-210, No. 447. Table A, page 2.

2. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1985 Table 682, Page 407

3. Ibid.

4. Household and Family Characteristics, Table H

5. Ibid., Table F, Pg. 7

6. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Money Income and Poverty Status in the United States, 1989, Page 9

7. Meisenheimer, Joseph, "Black College Graduates in the Labor Market, 1979 and 1989", Monthly Labor Review, Vol 113, No. 11, November 1990.

The **Chairman**. Thank you very much for your very fine statement.

Senator Domenici.

## OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR DOMENICI

Senator **Domenici**. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Let me just say how pleased I am to be here, albeit less than for the full time that the chairman is going to conduct this hearing.

I just want to make two points:

First, as a matter of personal observation and something that touched me very briefly in my own household, I have a young son who chose in between a good job and going back to college to teach.

And he chose a Catholic school up the street that is all black.

I must say, he is a rather marvelous kid.

They loved him and he loved them, and he did a great job of teaching sixth, seventh, and eighth grade math, never having taught math, and never having even taken any math since he was a senior in high school.

I think he was a marvelous teacher, nonetheless, but one day he brought a young boy home, a young black boy, and they had a nice time together and he said, Dad, I think from what I can find out, this 13-year-old boy whose name is Joseph, he only has a 50–50 chance of surviving in the neighborhood he lives in to reach the age of 18.

I said, you've got to be crazy. What are you talking about?

So he went through the whole neighborhood and what was happening in that neighborhood back here in Washington, and frankly I believe him.

I believe that that young boy only has a 50–50 chance of reaching 18.

He went through the entire lineage of uncles and cousins in that neighborhood for that particular family.

That was about what he said was true.

Second, I have taken the opportunity on my own as a Republican to look at the decade of the 1980's from the economic standpoint, while my friends on the other side take issue with some of the things I have found and put on the table regarding what happened to all Americans once we got out of the recession and started down that 7 years of prosperity.

I found some startling facts: that sustained economic growth is good for everyone, not just rich people.

It is very, very good for poor people, and recessions are terrible for poor people.

But I also found, and I must tell you, that the one huge negative in the decade of the 1980's and the decade of the 1970's, but it is growing and it is getting exponentially worse, is that economic growth does not seem to help single head-of-household families and unwed mothers who have children.

In fact they are, in our economic system, in spite of others moving up, they are either stuck—stalemated, economically speaking—or going back.

That is getting to be a larger portion of the population.

If you now speak of children in poverty, certainly children in poverty are growing dramatically in America, and it is almost directly related to the child growth.

In the area I am speaking of, there are more children in that group that I have just alluded to, and that too is growing.

So I say to you leaders who are here, and to you, Governor Wilder, I truly believe that solutions to this problem do not rest with any single party or any political operatives.

Try us on it.

What we want to know is, how?

I have heard a lot of talk, and I am impressed. I have heard you talk about the Civil Rights Act, and some of us are concerned.

I will tell you, however, from my research of the Civil Rights Act, the part that is dispute between the White House and the Congress, that piece is not going to do a lot for getting our minorities hired because the issue is an issue of a very small proportion of the work force in terms of the problems of it.

In fact, it is very, very small, like a half of a percent of the issues will be under that section that is in contest.

Nonetheless, I do not make that case to argue that we should not do something but, rather, that when we do it, and if we do it, I do not think we can expect miraculous gains in the problem you are speaking to.

So I hope that as you move through your conferences, as you have alluded to in these kinds of hearings, that all of you, those of you who have succeeded, will look back and say how can we help others within our community succeed.

I hope you will be honest in your community.

I think you are beginning to do that.

And, honest with us, because both need to do some changing.

We need to, and so does the black community, and so do the black teenagers.

You alluded to that, Governor.

You did not say they are all our problem. Part of it is their problem.

I think we are on the threshold of a decade of prosperity instead of the pessimism that people allude to.

I truly believe America is going to come out of this much stronger in all respects, including economically speaking.

But I think we have to find a way to be more proud together of achievements in the minority community, and particularly the blacks.

I just hope you will continue to be constructive and give us good, new innovative ways to be helpful.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Domenici.

Let me introduce now all of the panelists who will be participating in the course of the day.

Of course we have heard from Governor Wilder, and we have heard from Dorothy Height.

Dr. Douglas Glasgow, a scholar here in Washington, DC.

We have Dr. Billy Jones, commissioner of New York Mental Health in the City of New York.

We have Marc Mauer, the assistant director of The Sentencing Project in Washington, DC.

We have Dr. Marvin McKinney from the Mott Foundation in my hometown of Flint, MI.

We have Dr. Sam Myers, Jr., who is professor of Afro-American Studies at the University of Maryland.

We have Dr. Margaret Beale Spencer from Emory University in Atlanta, GA, and of course others I have not mentioned, but you all have prepared remarks for the record today and we are going to include all of those remarks in the record.

I would like to now get a discussion going around the room and invite the participation of all of our panelists.

I would like to start it off by asking for some reflections.

I am going to go to Dr. Jones, initially, and then I would just like to have it move around as people feel moved to speak.

I would like to pose the question: When we think about this data with respect to circumstances and trend lines facing black males in urban America, to help us better understand the cross connection with those two things, how is this impacting urban America?

How is urban America, as such, impacting the black male experience?

How do we draw out of our knowledge, the knowledge we can assemble today, the plight, if you will, of urban America and black males in our society who are in urban America? What should we be focusing on?

This committee of course has jurisdiction in the area of urban policy, in addition to other assignments that we carry.

What should we be focusing our attention on that can start to break some of this cycle of difficulty?

I would just welcome your reflections on that to open it up.

Then we will go wherever someone wishes to comment.

## STATEMENT OF DR. BILLY E. JONES, COMMISSIONER, NEW YORK CITY MENTAL HEALTH, NEW YORK, NY

Dr. JONES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First let me express greetings from the mayor of the city of New York, who as you know is very committed and involved with regard to this particular topic, and is also a member of the Commission and has been very actively involved in the planning of the conference.

In regard to the particular question, I think what has been said so far, certainly from my own experience, the issues that we are talking about are I think at least twofold in that we are talking about one. The kind of environmental issues that impact our African-American males in this society and have been, I think, clearly outlined in many of the statements that have been presented today.

They are the loss of economic opportunity, the problems with being last-hired/first-fired kind of situation, those who are involved in the Persian Gulf coming back and not being able to find jobs, the fear that all of us here have, all of these kinds of economic missed opportunities, as well as the educational missed opportunities, when you look at the educational system as it exists in most urban centers now.

So that I think those environmental factors in which the African-American male finds themselves is very much of the external problems that are there.

Now those factors having been in place now for certainly longer than one generation I think have caused the kind of internal psychological problems that have also been touched on, but more implied and inferred than really spelled out.

I think we have a generation of young black men now who have difficulty in the sense of being able to express their own aggression and need for self-assertion.

The avenues are not available, or are available in very limited fashion, so that the expression of those normal drives gets channeled into very socially unacceptable patterns.

I think that when you look at that particular issue and the need for that, when you understand personality development and you look at how this occurs with young people, period, it is clear that those aggressive, self-assertive needs have to be expressed.

And it is society's responsibility, not the young adult or teenager's responsibility, to choose and help to model the ways in which those drives should be expressed and can be expressed in a way that is healthy for society.

I think we all understand very clearly the whole issue of the sexual instincts and how they need to be channeled in ways that support society's aims and goals.

I do not think that we as a society are doing that nearly sufficiently for our young black males.

The **Chairman**. Who would like to follow on with a comment in that area?

[The complete prepared statement of Billy E. Jones follows:]

The City of New York

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# TESTIMONY PRESENTED BEFORE CONGRESSIONAL HEARING ON BLACK MALES IN URBAN AMERICA

BILLY E. JONES, M.D.
COMMISSIONER

March 19, 1991

## Testimony Presented Before
## Congressional Hearing on Black Males in Urban America

By Billy E. Jones, M.D.

Good afternoon. I am Billy E. Jones, Commissioner of New York City's Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Alcoholism Services. It is a pleasure to be here today. This hearing provides a much needed national forum to highlight the unique and devastating problems that burden African Americans and which place a particular hardship on young African American males. I would like to discuss some of the common mental health problems of African American males and how we can create a healthier environment for them to grow and flourish.

I administer the nation's largest municipal, community-based mental health care system. According to the recently released 1990 census, African Americans make up 28% of New York City's population. However, they account for 34% of the people served in our mental health programs and 33% of those admitted to the inpatient psychiatric units of municipal hospitals. They represent 68% of New York's single homeless mentally ill population. Clearly, New York's African Americans suffer disproportionately from mental illness. Yet these figures, in all probability, mask the full extent of the problem. African Americans are both underserved by our mental health care system and unlikely to seek out such care. This is especially true for males.

The prevalence of mental illness among New York's African American population differs little from that of those living in other urban centers. What factors contribute to this phenomena and how can we begin to address the problem?

Mental illnesses among African Americans is, in part, caused and exacerbated by the same external factors that contribute to physical illnesses. In their highly publicized study of males in Harlem, Colin McCord, M.D. and Harold P. Freeman, M.D. note that "psychological stress" is a prime contributor to excess mortality. In fact, cardiovascular disease, a stress-related condition, accounts for almost one quarter of the excess mortality cited in the study. Asthma and gastrointestinal disorders, too, have often been found to be stress-related conditions. Mental illness in the form of stress or in the form of depression, alcoholism and substance abuse is directly contributing to the early death of African Americans.

Crucial to understanding the mental health problems of African American males is acknowledging that they live in a hostile environment. While young African Americans and white males alike must cope with and resolve internal psychological conflicts, the pervasive nature of racism increases stress and limits the ability of African American males to resolve conflicts. Black males confront an environment that impedes opportunities for growth, development and enhancement. It is no accident that the occurrence of suicide peaks among African American males in their twenties, while among whites suicide increases with age.

Also contributing to poor mental and physical health is the fact that African American males have few legitimate channels for their aggression and self assertion. Limited employment and educational opportunities restrict options, reduce earning power and undercut an individual's ability to usefully contribute to a family unit. These problems are exacerbated by destructive myths and stereotypes that this society attributes to Black males. Too often, the media portrays men of color as either sports heros or criminals and this limited vision causes psychological hardship. The issue of Willie Horton reverberated so effectively during the last presidential campaign because it responded to deeply held beliefs among whites.

A consequence of all of this is that the young African American male feels resentment, anger, frustration and hopelessness and searches for psychological release. With so few available options, however, that search too often leads to alcoholism, substance abuse and crime. When aggression is allowed no healthy outlets, it emerges in less satisfactory ways. For the young African American man growing up in a stress-ridden inner city and dealing with the breakdown of family and social networks, aggression is an especially hazardous and potentially lethal problem.

Prior to the civil rights movement, African American males were taught by necessity not to be assertive or aggressive. This passivity was one essential way to stay alive in a segregated and racist society. An important psychological consequence of the Black Power movement of the 1960's and 70's was that it released the African American male from the constraints of passivity. At long last, the male was able to express himself freely and naturally and to acknowledge aggression.

Yet, self liberation was not accompanied by increased economic and educational opportunities. In America, aggression has long been channeled into economic competition. However, African Americans have not been allowed this option. The on-going inability of African American males to compete effectively in society's mainstream has had important psychological ramifications.

How do we eliminate the factors that contribute disproportionately to mental and physical problems among African Americans. The best route would be to eradicate those environmental factors that contribute to stress and illness. This involves continuing collective efforts. Political activism and community involvement offer a healthy way to utilize aggression in a society that is far more comfortable with the flickering televised images of Black men being led away in handcuffs or scoring the winning point.

In addition, the African American community must use its collective power to teach its children to sublimate their aggression to promote advancement. Our children need to be part of a group dynamic that helps them cope successfully with the stress of being considered an outsider in American society. Emphasis must be placed on keeping African American children in school. In addition, we must insure their participation in a broad range of social and recreational activities. If children are taught to compete effectively, they can use those skills in the workforce as adults.

Everyone needs to see themselves positively reflected as a contributing member to society. At present, there are too few role models known to young African American males. We must act to make them aware that a growing number of African Americans are succeeding in a wide range of occupations. Those holding leadership positions in business, science, politics and the arts must also be community leaders. The emergence of elected and appointed officials like Mayor Dinkins and Governor Wilder has helped to fill this leadership gap. Activism in the African American community helped produce these leaders. Clearly, the responsibility for developing and promoting additional role models will also rest on the African American community itself.

Efforts to establish public schools for African American boys have generated intense controversy. Yet this approach offers important advantages to children and adolescents who are being denied a positive self image because of the eurocentric bias of the larger society. We also need to close the growing chasm between the African American professional class and what has been termed the urban underclass. Those who have succeeded need to work with those who have not had the chance to flourish. Successful professionals can help others build skills and develop constructive attitudes. Assistance can be provided by volunteering to work on civic, religious, political and educational initiatives.

While it is an important component, volunteerism, in and of itself, is insufficient. Government must help to increase the participation of African Americans and other minorities in American society. Ultimately a caring government will help those in need and improve the quality of life for everyone.

Thank you for the opportunity to talk with you.

The **CHAIRMAN**. Yes, Dr. Spencer.

## STATEMENT OF DR. MARGARET BEALE SPENCER, EMORY UNIVERSITY, ATLANTA, GA

Dr. **SPENCER**. I am really pleased that Dr. Jones opened the issue of the psychological functioning of black boys.

Let me start off by saying that I speak about black "boys" as encompassing the early childhood and adolescent years, and should be described as just that, black "boys," because black boys have a right to be children.

Very often we end up adultifying our youth, and we do not let them come to an adulthood that will allow them to discharge the kind of energy that was referred to here.

For example, what do we do? We do different things, given the developmental period that we are talking about. For example, in terms of the early childhood and adolescent years, we can do several things in order to teach our children to function effectively.

No. 1, we must ensure that our educators be exposed to a knowledge base that also includes the experiences of black children.

For the most part, we have used public dollars to generate a scientific knowledge base that is totally exclusive of the experiences of African-American males.

This is the group that has the worst life course outcomes.

This is the group that we know the least about. And we have used public dollars to generate a very exclusionary knowledge base, and I am really concerned about that.

In order to generate appropriate legislation, you have to know *what* to do. Accodingly, you have to understand the developmental course, the *normal* developmental course also for black males.

That is not what we have right now. Thus, when we educate our educators in postsecondary schools across this country, their training is so narrow such that when they come face to face with children of color, and black males in particular in their classrooms, they do not know what to do—which means that they are less than competent as educators.

We also know about the impact of early maturation.

We have wonderful data bases on the experience, in fact, on the longitudinal developmental experiences of white boys and white girls in this society.

We know, for example, that early maturing males have very different experiences than late maturing males. That is, we have information for white males.

We can infer that, in terms of black males, who are early maturing youth in schools across this country, that they are not viewed as early maturing black *boys* who are to be challenged academically; but instead they are viewed as frightening "black men." You do not attempt to teach frightening black men. The issue, instead, is to control and contain.

Therefore, that leads them into the period of adolescence which, as Dr. Jones mentioned, under the best of conditions is a very, very difficult period.

If young people already have a history of turning off school as a coping mechanism because of the feedback they are getting in school from teachers who know least about how to teach them, it is not surprising then that you see psychic energy being expended by male youth in less than positive ways.

So then we move adolescents into adulthood.

Given the lack of an adequate education, these young men now are not well trained enough to get into the job market. The options are extremely poor, thus their choices are poor.

Therefore, they are not part of the marriageability pool. Therefore, they are not available to help in the rearing of both boys and girls.

In adulthood, fathers play an extremely important role both for girls and for boys.

We have been very, very wrong headed, for example, in our assault, if you will, on teen pregnancy. We thought that if we could just get these girls to stop having babies—that would cure the problem.

It has not worked. It has not worked because we still do not understand the important impact that fathers play in the lives of girls.

Fathers play different roles for boys and for girls.

Fathers serve the role as a safe "beau" for girls. Fathers give girls feedback about their femininity.

If fathers do not give girls that feedback, then girls ask for it from males, their male peers. Given that their male peers are also adolescents, the male youth misinterprets the implicit question concerning femininity as an invitation for sex.

We have not stopped to look at these undergirding psychological and normal developmental issues for black youth although we certainly have for white children—that is, in terms of what roles black fathers play for their children—particularly their sons.

Black men serve the role of teacher to their sons. This is important because our research suggests that when you ask black boys who they identify with, independent of whether or not their father is in their home, black boys identify a black male.

The bottom line here is that, whomever that model is, the particular individual may have a developmental history which contains short-term decisionmaking processes which make *him* somewhat less than the best model for young black boys to emulate.

But, of course, given what happens in marriages, independent of race, we are not always objective relative to effective or emotional relationships. One may not deal with the total picture. Instead one deals with the feelings only.

The bottom line here is that our young men are bonded to fathers and the other adult figures or role models so described. As indicated, the models that are available are often less-than-positive, healthy role models for African-American boys.

Thus, in essence, these youth lack the social and developmental experiences to "hopefully" go into the job market and to ultimately become a part of the marriageability pool, and finally to aid the child rearing of effective and competent children.

The cycle continues. What I am suggesting here is that, one thing we definitely need is a better scientific base on the normal developmental experiences of African-American males since, for the most part, the literature that is available focuses on deviance and psychopathology but not on *health*.

We need a literature on normal development, resilient outcomes, and health for children of color—and males in particular.

[Summary statement of Margaret Beale Spencer follows:]

# SUMMARY STATEMENT

Testimony to
The Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs
for a scheduled hearing on the problems of
African American Males in Urban America

Submitted by
Margaret Beale Spencer, PhD
Emory University
March 19, 1991

My comments today are offered to you as a developmental psychologist and scholar, as a parent of three adolescents (2 daughters attending colleges and a high school aged son), and as an American citizen who is extremely concerned that we continue to squander and neglect one particular group of this country's most important asset-- its youth. I will divide my comments into three parts: First, an introduction will articulate the major concerns. Second, a more detailed statement will attempt to link the experiences of Black males to broader societal traditions, conditions and practices. And third, a summary of preliminary and health-promoting recommendations will serve to conclude my testimony.

My testimony will broach three key issues. The perspective taken and particular synthesis reflects a strong belief that the issues and problems confronting the life course experiences of African American males 1) are linked to gender role, race and social economic issues, 2) span the entire life course relative to the breath of impact, and 3) need to be addressed systematically in different ways at varying points throughout the life course. That is to say that there is no single "magic bullet" remedy possible. That approach was taken on the out-of wedlock births issue-- i.e, teen-age pregnancy. We thought for a while that if we could only get girls to stop having babies as teens, it would solve all of the problems of the Black family. That "single-minded" simplistic analysis hasn't worked has it? We never really explored the underlying reasons for early parenthood. We need to re-address the issue as it relates to black fathers and the important role that they also serve in the rearing of daughters. For now, we can say that black fathers-- like all fathers-- provide the role of teacher to the son and the first safe beau for the daughter. That is, he gives his son lessons on manhood and affords his daughter feedback on her femininity. Getting feedback from the father as a safe male is extremely important. If she fails to hear feedback about her femininity from her father, she seeks the information from her male peers who mis-interpret the invitation for femininity feedback as, instead, an invitation for sex. African American men need support in carrying out their traditional roles as fathers through becoming stable and economically viable providers.

How do we approach the deluge of issues confronting African American males? Literally, we must start from the beginning. First, it is paramount that we acknowledge that the fabric of American life for people of color remains problematic at best, and hostile at worst. Chestang (1971) theorizes about the life-course context for American people of color by describing it as a hostile environment which has several important features. Since social injustice is illegal in this country given civil rights legislation, societal inconsistency has emerged which is significantly more virulent. Individuals struggle with its undermining effects on every level. Indirectly, the issue was raised by Franklin Delano Roosevelt over 50 years ago in a speech delivered on September 20, 1940. He noted:

> We cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future.

We are here today because it is clear that we are not building our youth for the rigors of the future in the case of African American males who continue to live in an extremely high-risk environment. Their hostile environment exists not only because of economic issues and the peculiar social forces which accompany the American experience for people of color, but, moreover, relative to prevention and intervention efforts, African American males represent the group for whom we have the least amount of solid scholarship about their life course development. There is abundant information about psychopathology and social malaise. Globally speaking, in all societies except for two, males are expected to prepare themselves for the instrumental or "breadwinner" role. Although legislation has insured that women experience work-force equity and opportunities unheard of 25 years ago, however, it remains a cultural and social expectation that males form and care for their families. Legislation may provide new possibilities although cultural and social traditions may well undermine real opportunity to self actualize since cultural patterns change very slowly. Although there is much that is unknown given the biased nature of research on African American males, however, there are some important lessons available.

First, young African American males have a history in childhood and adolescence during which time specific fundamental events must occur. Boys must learn the lessons of manhood from men. Our data suggest that when asked about the man with whom they most identify, the majority of our adolescents indicate a black man who might be the father (i.e., independent of whether the father resides in the home or not); also identified might be an uncle, older brother, or a grandfather. Importantly, it is from this identified figure that black boys, as they develop, learn-- both formally and informally-- what it means to be a man in this society. Many of the lessons learned are problematic since the man with whom a child identifies at the emotional level, may also represent a model who has had few options and, thus, may have made poor choices. However, if you love, admire, and care for someone-- you don't always look at the entire individual or context either objectively or clearly. Certainly the virtual 50% American divorce rate speaks to the issue most plainly.

The point I am making here is that African American male youth have multiple examples of men who appear to have mastered all of the socially approved tasks although still unable "to capture" the American dream. Again, as indicated, we lack solid scientific studies on African American youth although several good longitudinal data sets are available on white youths. The findings consistently suggest different social and academic experiences for early- versus late- maturing boys. We know from observational data and anecdotes that the experiences of early maturing African American boys in American schools are not the same as those of white boys. As a 5' 8" male 6th grader, a black youth is not viewed as an early maturing boy for whom much more is expected due to size. Instead, they are more often perceived and treated as frightening and threatening black men. One does not attempt to teach a perceived frightening Black man: The goal, instead, is to contain and control.

Adolescence for black males is often more difficult than the early childhood years. The context becomes increasingly high risk for both vulnerable and resilient males as they proceed into a developmental period which is stressful under the best of conditions of environmental support. All American youth must handle social expectations for success, educational pressures, and ever increasing family responsibilities which prepare them for adult roles. In addition, all youth must cope with the normative physical and hormonal changes, the unavoidable "new ways" of thinking, and the emotional feelings-- the pronounced highs, lows, and wide swings-- which accompany adolescent changes. For African American males, they share with black females the added dilemmas which accompany poverty and covert racial tensions. However, they also share with white males the social expectations to take on the instrumental or provider role.

In fact, a critical developmental task confronting adolescents is the need to make vocational decisions which have life-course implications. In the United States, like other western societies, particularly for men, one's job has both a psychological and economic life-long impact. Not only does one's position in the labor force influence life-style options but also one's perceptions of personal efficacy, self esteem, their children's life chances, and expected relationships with others in the community (Blau & Duncan, 1967 as cited in Vander Zanden), but given the linkages of employment with adequate health insurance and thus basic health care, adolescent decision making and vocational choices and the availability of vocational options have severe implications for the African American male, his children, and whether or not he is marriageable at all. In summary, our perspective suggested that structural barriers persist as a hostile environment in which African American youths are born, reared, educated, and emulate available male role models. Structural conditions and an inadequate knowledge base concerning life course development compromise our ability to determine what needs to be done and how to do it. However, there are some knowns. Because of the normal complexity of development, different strategies must be used at different developmental periods. Black men require support in the active rearing of their sons (and daughters). To assist in child rearing, support is needed to enhance their inclusion in marriageability pools which means being gainfully employed in jobs which do not have a finite, glass ceiling.

Black male youths require academic experiences with educators who see them as having potential to learn and to lead productive lives, rather than viewing them, particularly during the heightened growth period of adolescence, as frightening black men. To be a competent educator means having had the training and academic preparation which makes them knowledgeable and comfortable enough to educate and to intellectually challenge any and all children. In addition, other goals might include special programs:

1) To keep black boys in school and academically oriented;

2) To heighten health consciousness;

3) To support and affirm the importance of constructive social networks and support systems;

4) To offer a compensatory social and cultural emphasis which affirms the black male's group identity and humanity;

5) To re-define (from a proactive versus reactive perspective) what it means to be a man.

In addition, support should be forthcoming which would aid in the promotion of basic theory and developmental data on the life-course experiences of black males. The information should be used for 1) developing more comprehensive and representative theories of development, 2) formulating developmental models of coping and adaptation, 3) proposing and implementing programs for vocational training and re-tooling, and 4) increasing our methods for insuring equitable treatment. When combined, the proposals should enhance young black males' sense of personal efficacy, contribute to a more constructive identity as a _male_ and an African American, foster the development of a more "competent self", and provide a major role both in the enhancement of African American family stability and as a major contributor to American life.

The **Chairman**. Who would like to speak next? [No response.]

Does anyone else want to add anything on that particular point? I wanted to sort of bend that question. Go ahead.

## STATEMENT OF DR. SAM MYERS, JR., PROFESSOR, AFRO-AMERICAN STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

Dr. **Myers**. Back to the original question of what is happening in urban America.

I am struck by the fact that the chairman and Senators posed statistics in a manner that suggested that this is new, that this is a new piece of information that is surprising to all of us, but in fact this is not new.

The crisis of black males has been an enduring factor in the history of America.

Others will speak today about the role of imprisonment as a source of draining young black males out of productive spheres in American life.

People have expressed alarm at how rapidly the prisons have grown, and how black the prisons have become, but in fact the prisons of America have historically been disproportionately black.

Others will talk about the decline in the ratio of black males to black females.

As Dorothy Height pointed out, this problem with female-headed families is intricately linked to the problems of black men.

The **Chairman**. Could you just pull that microphone a little closer to you? I just want to be sure that you can be heard clearly throughout the room.

Excuse me.

Dr. **Myers**. The issue is: Are these things new? Is imprisonment a new problem confronting black males in America? Is there a reduction in the supply of young black males, people who are willing and able to be fathers for the families? Is this new?

The answer is, no, it is not new.

It is something that has been going on for centuries.

So for scholars who have been looking at this problem, there is the question of why now are we having African-American summits around the country?

Why now are we beginning to rush to find solutions to problems that have existed for centuries?

[The complete prepared statement of Samuel L. Myers, Jr., follows:]

# The Marginalization of Black Men

Testimony Prepared for Hearings Before the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs
March 19, 1991

by

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and
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Research reported herein was conducted in part under grants from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Upjohn Institute, and the National Research Council and in collaboration with William A.Darity, Jr., Professor of Economics, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. It also draws upon work conducted in collaboration with William J. Sabol, U. S. Government Accounting Office and Emmett Carson, Ford Foundation. The opinions expressed, however, are my own and may not represent the views of the funding agencies or my coauthors.

## Introduction

There is a crisis facing young black males in America. Labor force participation rates are low; unemployment is soaring; crime has become a way of life for many. Drug selling seems a viable alternative to college and an M.B.A.

Black males are withdrawing from many productive spheres of the economy: arrests, increasingly for drug-related crimes, serve to drain off large pools of black males unwanted in the industrial era. What criminal arrest begins, incarceration in America's overcrowded and violent prisons and jails finishes. Black imprisonment is another source of withdrawal from the productive spheres of American life. And homicides, particularly among young black males and predominately at the hands of other young black males, contribute further to the depletion of the supply of young black men.

In short, young black males--not all but an important subset of them--are becoming marginalized. As they become less and less useful for the functioning of the economy they are being drawn off through criminal violence, imprisonment and homicide. The consequence of this marginalization process is that the ability of the black community to reproduce healthy and productive members is hampered. The marginalization of young black men contributes to the decline in marriageable mates for black women who are forming unprecedented numbers of female-headed families. The children who grow up in these families, absent the consistent stabilizing influence of a productive father, more likely to be poor, more likely to be lured into criminal activities, and ultimately are more likely to themselves create female-headed households that continue the cycle of poverty facing many black families. Thus, even if we are able to arrest the present crisis confronting black males that contributes to the decline in marriageable black mates, there will be remnants of this generation's crisis to deal with in the future.

The factors that have contributed to the present crisis of the marginalization of black males are many. Two stand out: failed labor market strategies of the 1970s and 1980s that focused on training disadvantaged youth for jobs that were disappearing; and law enforcement policies that further contributed to the marginalization of black males.

The labor market policies of the past decades focused on minority youth as untrained, unskilled and undisciplined workers. These policies ignored an important opportunity for exploiting the entrepreneurial and enterprising strengths that many inner-city youth possess. Instead, they focused on weaknesses that even if remedied offered dubious hope for mobility out of the ghetto. And, the result has been that illegal markets seem now to claim the talents of our most enterprising youth.

Criminal justice policies also have had marginalizing impacts on black males. Throughout the 1980s, arrest and incarceration have loomed as the fate of escalating numbers of young black males. Part of this is the result of deteriorating labor market opportunities for young black males. With legitimate work becoming less and less a viable option for economic survival, crime and illegal entrepreneurial pursuits have become more and more viable alternatives. But another part is due to misguided law enforcement efforts. For example, the war on drugs of the 1980s was supposed to be a supply-side attack that would eliminate drugs from our streets and cut crime and violence to boot. Instead, drug availability in inner-cities grew. Drug addiction among blacks reached new heights. Although the risks of engaging in certain illegal activities, such as drug dealing, undeniably increased as drug arrest rates rose dramatically, but even as the share of all black arrests attributable to drug abuse violations multiplied, young black males nevertheless gravitated in greater numbers toward entrepreneurial criminal activities. And, as prices of and demand for such drugs as cocaine declined throughout the last decade, bringing arguably lower profits, still younger black males--some barely out of elementary school--were finding illegal earnings opportunities galore.

In sum, a combination of failed labor market training strategies and misguided law enforcement efforts contributed to continued marginalization of young black males. The implication is that at least some of the crisis we now face is a **policy induced** crisis. It is difficult to know whether these policy induced impacts were intentional or simply unfortunate by-products of well-meaning efforts to combat the poverty and distress of our inner cities. Nonetheless, we must learn from the lessons of the 1970s and 1980s as we prepare to confront the residue of our mistakes.

### Dimensions of the Marginalization of Black Males[1]

That a portion of the population is marginalized, is inextricably linked to recent discussions of the problems of the underclass. There are varying definitions of this class but one of the most influential views arises in the works of William Wilson. In his Declining Significance of Race, 2nd edition, 1980 (pp. 156-157), Wilson conceives of underclass in a broader Weberian concept of class rather than a Marxist concept of class. He emphasizes social relations of exchange as opposed to a Marxist notion of the social relations of production. Class is a socio-economic identity. The underclass is a portion of the lower-class of society.

Wilson describes the underclass as the following:

> "...The population which represents the bottom of the economic hierarchy and not only includes those with incomes below the poverty level but also the permanent welfare recipients, the long-term unemployed and those who officially dropped out of the labor market." (p.156)

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[1] This section is based on William A. Darity, Jr. and Samuel L. Myers, Jr. "Black-White Earnings Gaps Have Narrowed: The Problem of Family Structure, Earnings Inequality and the Marginalization of Black Men," AASP Working Paper Series, No. 05, 1991, and "Family Structure and the Marginalization of Black Men: Policy Implications," in C. Mitchell-Kernan and B. Tucker, eds., The Male Shortage and the African-American Family, Los Angeles, CA: Russell Sage/UCLA Press, 1990.

If they became full-time workers or re-entered the labor market they would, in an overwhelming majority of cases, go into the lowest rung of the job ladder. This implies movement in and out of the underclass takes place mainly within the ranks of the lower class. For Wilson, the underclass represents the more impoverished segment of the lower class.

Wilson retains his concept of the underclass in a more recent book The Truly Disadvantaged, 1987. Here he argues that there is a segment of U.S. population disproportionately black, located in ghetto neighborhoods, and with characteristics which lead them to be isolated and divorced from the mainstream lifestyle of the American population. Wilson says, it remains a heterogeneous grouping of individuals and families bound together in their apartness or outsideness from, "the mainstream American occupational system".

Included in this group are individuals who: a) lack training and skills or experience long term unemployment; b) are not seeking employment at all; c) engage in street crime and other forms of aberrant behavior; and, d) families who experience spells of long term poverty and/or welfare dependency.

Wilson, in a sense, is adopting a view that there are certain groups left behind as American society progresses along a particular evolutionary trend. These groups are left behind are not only in a metaphorical sense but also in a literal sense. The segment of black population that is middle class in characteristics--using the Weberian version of the nature of class structure--has presumably moved out of the ghetto and left largely the poverty population. Wilson explicitly refers to this poverty population as not only low in income but is characterized by a set of particular social pathologies. The social pathologies reinforce the underclass.

It appears in Wilson's analysis of the nature of underclass that the causal mechanism for pathological behaviors stems from other types of structural considerations that are taking place in the society at large. In contrast, when we look at Charles Murray's book Losing Ground, we find the responsibility for these behaviors resting on the shoulders of the poor themselves. Again, what appears is a permanent or persistent poverty population in the particular sense that poverty seems to be passed from one generation to the next among the same set of families.

These families and their offspring are characterized by: crime, high rates of illiteracy, high incidence of female headship among the families, lower labor force participation rates, and usually high rates of illiteracy among graduates of high schools, lower test scores and certain forms of cultural isolation. This pattern of behavior identifies the underclass and simultaneously seems to be the cause of their poverty status in much of Murray's discussion.

Why particular individuals or particular members of a racial group are more predisposed to certain behaviors is the critical question that researchers have yet to resolve. In Wilson's analysis, there is a tendency for the previously described behavior to arise in communities that are in some sense spatially and culturally isolated from the norms that produce middle class lifestyles. In Murray's argument, it seems that the very nature of American social policy and the kinds of incentives and disincentives created by American social policy have tended to reinforce antisocial behavior and compelled individuals to reproduce their own poverty status.

Another discussion on conceptualization of the underclass is in Douglas Glasgow's book, The Black Underclass: Poverty Unemployment and Entrapment of Ghetto Youth (l98l). Glasgow espouses the notion that the underclass is a population locked into poverty over a long historical time period, with the transmission of poverty status occurring from generation to generation; the same families continuing to experience poverty status.

There is another feature of Glasgow's discussion which has not been given much emphasis but which is germane for our modeling of what we call the marginalization of black males. Glasgow thinks it is useful to conceive of the underclass as a permanently entrapped population of poor persons, unused and unwanted, accumulated in various parts of the country. We place emphasis on his phrase "unused and unwanted".

The unwantedness notion corresponds to some extent with Wilson's suggestion that it is a population left behind. But it is a stronger statement because not only is this population left behind, it appears in Glasgow's perspective to be a population which will be subjected to public neglect or repudiation.

It is in this light that we approach the problem of the marginalization of black men. Black men are withdrawing from the productive spheres of American life. They are literally disappearing, as we described in our popular article, "Where Have All the Black Men Gone?" (Black Excellence, Fall, 1988). Again, the effect is a declining pool of marriageable black men.

Two important dimensions of the declining pool of black men especially concern us. One is the differential mortality rates. While mortality rates have been falling for both black men and black women, they have been falling faster for black women resulting in a shortfall of men in black communities. The other important dimension is the increased institutionalization of black men and their withdrawal from the civilian labor force.

In 1950 the age-adjusted mortality rate for black females of all ages was 1,107 per 100,000. In 1960 it was 917 and in 1970 it was 814. By 1980 the number of deaths per 100,000 resident population fell to 631. In 1983 the age-adjusted mortality rate for black females was 590 per 100,000. By 1986 it seemed to level out at 588 per 100,000. Black women are experiencing lower death rates in the in the 1980s as compared to previous decades although the sharp downward trend seems to have abated.

In 1950 the age-adjusted number of deaths per 100,000 resident population for black men was 1,373. In 1960 this rate was 1,246 but in 1970, at the height of the Vietnam War, it rose again to 1319. In 1983 it was down to 1020; but rose again in the mid-1980s to reach 1027 per 100,000 in 1986. Thus, even with the past declines in black male death rates, the recent increases in black male mortality combined with the more more steadily declining mortality rates for black females mean an decrease in the relative supply of men.

The transition from youth to young adulthood is a very uncertain time for many black men. They have the highest death rates among black males after infants and men over 55 years. Whereas 50 out of every 100,000 black male age 5 to 14 years died in 1979, 204 out of 100,000 age 15-24 years died in that year. Similarly, in 1986 42 out of every 100,00 black male age 5 to 14 years died; but among black males age 15 to 24 years old, 191 died. The death rate for young black men in the 15 to 24 years age group has remained more than four times that of those age 5 to 14 years since 1970. Thus, even though the death rates have fallen the odds that a young black male will make it to adulthood have not improved.

How does the death rate in 1979 among those age 15 to 24 years break down? Fifteen of the deaths were due to suicide, far more than the 5 per 100,000 in 1950 or the 10 per 100,000 in 1970. Another 36 of the deaths per 100,000 were caused by motor vehicle accidents. Things did not improve much by 1986. Of the 190.5 deaths per 100,000 young black men ages 15-24 in 1986, 11.5 were due to suicide and 35 were due to motor vehicle accidents.

By far, the predominant cause of death for young black men was homicide. Seventy-nine of the 190.5 deaths per 100,000 black males aged 15 to 24 were classified as murders in 1986. In 1950 only 20 percent of deaths in the 15 to 24 year old group of black males were due to homicides. Most of these murders are black men killing other black men. Black males are six to ten times as likely to be homicide victims as white males. In 1960 there were 36.7 homicide victimizations per 100,000 black males; among white males the homicide rate was 3.6 per 100,000. By 1980 the rate among black males rose to 66.6 per 100,000 while for white males it increased to 10.4 per 100,000. Violent death, unfortunately, has become increasingly the fate of these young men.

Figure 1 reveals that the decades long decline in black male homicide rates came to a halt in the mid-1980s. This figure shows the movement in the crude death rate for all ages of black males due to homicides and legal intervention. From a high of more than 75 deaths per 100,000 for all ages in 1972 to a low of less than 50 deaths per 100,000 black males, the homicide death rate declined consistently save for the up-turn in the late 1970s. Yet, in more recent years the black male homicide rate has risen again.

In contrast, the numbers of homicides for young black males 15-19 soared in the 1980s. Figure 2 shows this. According to the FBI's Uniform Crime Reports, the number

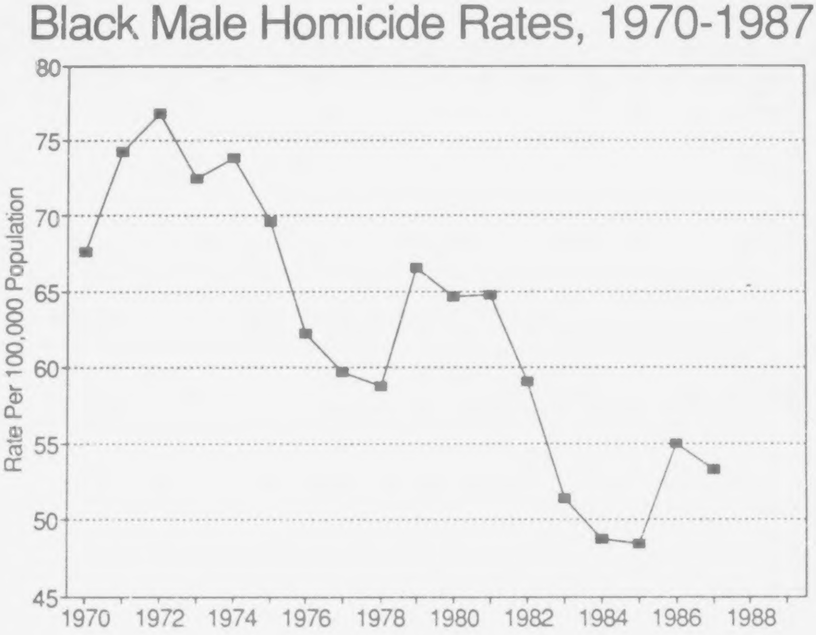
Black Male Homicide Rates, 1970-1987
Rate Per 100,000 Population
80
75
70
65
60
55
50
45
1970
1972
1974
1976
1978
1980
1982
1984
1986
1988

**Figure 1**

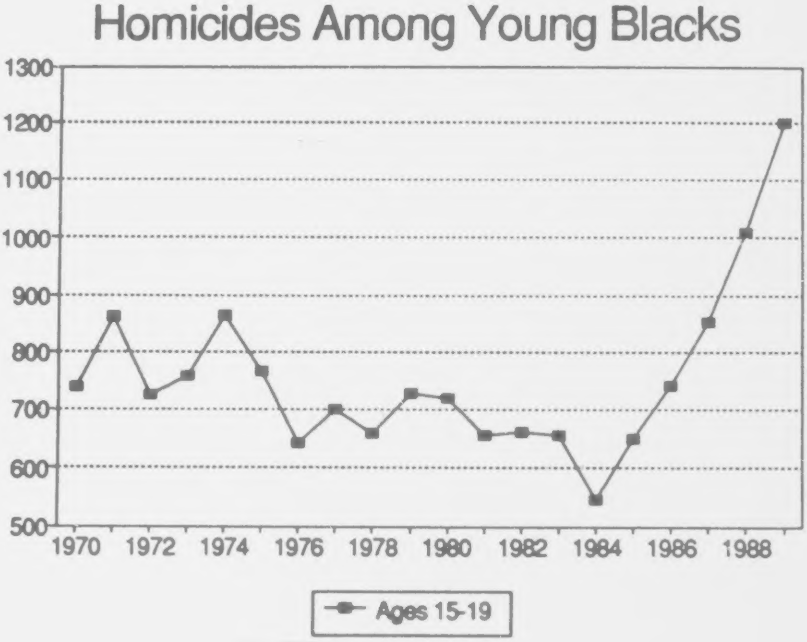
Homicides Among Young Blacks
1300
1200
1100
1000
900
800
700
600
500
1970
1972
1974
1976
1978
1980
1982
1984
1986
1988
Ages 15-19

**Figure 2**

of black male homicide victims in this age group rose from less than 600 in 1984 to 1200 in 1987. This follows an almost stable number of homicides among young black males throughout most of the 1970s and early 1980s.

Marginalization leads to self-destruction. Furthermore, young black males are being drawn out of the labor market and into the criminal market. Labor Department estimates speculate that fully three-quarters of all black males can expect to be arrested.

In a recent NAS study on the impact of crime in the black community, Myers and Sabol argue blacks who are imprisoned are not visibly different from those who are free in the community. A recent US Department of Justice report, submitted by Patrick Langan calculates that the lifetime probability of a black male being incarcerated was more than 18 percent in 1979; up from 16 percent in 1974. The single day probability rose from about 2 to 2.5 percent for young males alone. This represents a massive loss of freedom when one recognizes that in the general population the risk of incarceration is considerably below a fraction of one-half percent.

In 1970, black inmates made up 41 percent of the federal and state prison population. By 1980, blacks accounted for 44 percent of the national prison population. In 1983, when the general prison population was double what it was in 1970, 46 percent of the inmates were black.

### Failed Labor Market Policies

Job training programs for the disadvantaged focused on training youth for industrial and manufacturing jobs when blue-collar jobs were disappearing and crime becoming more and more attractive. Blacks and other disadvantaged workers were trained in the basic skills needed for success in industrial and manufacturing jobs. Indeed, while much of this effort was underwritten by the federal government through the Department of Labor, other local efforts received substantial assistance from manufacturing and industrial concerns.

In hindsight we see the irony of this. The massive outlays on Model Cities, MDTA, CETA and JTPA all seemed to line the pockets of a new breed of public manager, many of whom were blacks and other minorities. The growth in managerial jobs for blacks in the public sector almost paralleled the decline in manufacturing and basic industry jobs for the poor.

Yet, the poor were not moving into the new jobs created via the public effort to reduce poverty. The poor stayed poor. The middle class became the managerial class. The training programs of the 1970s treated clients as unskilled, inefficient and undisciplined dropouts. They needed the infusion of human capital in order to overcome the labor market deficiencies that were at the heart of their low earning power.

The street corner dude was inept at manual or industrial work but he was a perfect manager, a first rate risk taker, a fine entrepreneur. We tried to train these hustlers to be workers when they had all the Harvard Business School talents to be owners.

Meanwhile, the majority of the black entrepreneurial class fled the black community. Except for the Black Muslims, the black small-business class vanished to the suburbs, into corporate management and into managing the poor. This means that now the small food stores, the convenience stores, the clothing stores, and the variety shops are either owned and run by new waves of immigrant entrepreneurs or they have disappeared into the malls and into safer neighborhoods.

In cities like Los Angeles, Washington, New York and Chicago, the notion of hiring a black maid, or black handy man or black gardener has vanished. Of course, government training programs do not stoop so low, and blacks themselves look down on these occupations. Yet with the increase in two-earner families the demand for household and related services has skyrocketed and the going rate for yard work in a place like Silver Spring, Maryland is several times the minimum wage, generating a groundswell of entrepreneurial activity among Hispanic, Haitian and other immigrant workers.

Black youth are applying their entrepreneurial skills to a booming and lucrative drug market and are killing each other daily in an economic activity with high payoffs but low long-run returns.

All of this because we wanted to make workers out of the poor when they could be entrepreneurs. We could have trained welfare mothers in accounting, tax law, finance and bookkeeping so that they could run their own businesses.

We could have helped market the phenomenal talents of young street hustlers so that they could produce and sell food and clothing products in the black community. But we wanted them to be workers. So now the welfare mothers are more deeply entrenched on welfare and the street hustlers are killing and plundering in their drug wars.

Spurred by massive federal funding on such programs as MDTA and CETA, a whole industry evolved to service the market in training the disadvantaged. Does government-financed training work? Or better stated, does government training do what private training does not do? The rationale for government provision or financing of services is that the private market fails. In the case of training, the view is that blacks and other disadvantaged members of society fail to develop adequate skills or to receive adequate training in the private market. The public sector, then, offers a way to bridge the gap.

What sort of training is provided in the private sector and who gets it? These questions were recently answered in a major Rand Corporation report. The findings are clear. White males get their training largely on the job, which results in important improvements in earning for these men. Blacks, in contrast, must rely too heavily on general training that almost always fails to promise significant earnings gains.

Increasingly, scholars are questioning the effectiveness of publicly provided training for the disadvantaged. In particular, the move toward JTPA and its emphasis on "results" is perceived as having perverse consequences for blacks and other minorities. For example, John Jefferies and Howard Stanback point out:

> "A significant share of black unemployment is the product of capital flight. Adverse impacts occur through the jobs that are lost and the secondary effects felt by the deserted community. The fruits of business-oriented and profit-motivated economic development strategies contribute little to the economic stability and prosperity of black communities".

There has also been a dramatic shift in support away from programs for the neediest and the most disadvantaged during the ill-fated "industrial policy" debates during the 1980s. In essence, Jefferies and Stanback argue, support for training for disadvantaged workers waned because a) programs for that group have not worked; b) we now need the money for white male workers who are being dislocated as a result of structural changes in the economy.

Program administrators are aware of this dissatisfaction among scholars. They are confronted with contradictory signals. On the one hand they are asked to serve the most needy. On the other hand, they are told to get results. Their response to date has been to try to perform, in spite of their qualms about what performance ought to mean. Bernard Lefkowitz studied the attitudes of program officers and local officials involved with youth training projects. Through extensive interviews he discovered that most administrators considered U.S. Department of Labor measures of program performance defective. In particular, respondents felt that performance measures--such as placement rates--should be replaced by improvement measures. Such improvement measures might include changes in skills or certification for employment, rather than employment itself. There seems to be an emerging consensus among administrations that JTPA programs did not meet the needs of the most disadvantaged youth and adults.

### Drugs and Law Enforcement[2]

The dominant strategies adopted by federal and state law enforcement agencies over the past decade in fighting the war on illegal drugs have been supply-side strategies. Supply-side strategies include attempts to reduce the inflow of drugs at the nation's borders; to increase dealer risks through increased penalties; and to reduce street-level supply through tougher and more aggressive law enforcement. Whether the supply-side strategy was aimed at reducing the quantity of drugs at the local level, at the distributer's level or at the importer's level, the consensus among economists is the same: our supply-side strategies adopted during the 1980s were failures.[3]

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[2] This section is based on Samuel L. Myers, Jr., "Drugs and Market Structure: Is There Really a Drug Crisis in the Black Community?" Challenge, July, 1990. Reprinted in Trebach and Zeese, The Great Issues of Drug Policy, Washington D.C.: The Drug Policy Foundation, October, 1990.

The most obvious indicator of the policy failure is the fact that prices did not increase. Figure 3 shows this. Cocaine prices dropped sharply in the 1980s. The price of a pure gram of cocaine dropped from a high of $780.00 in 1979 to a low of $142.00 in 1987. The biggest decline occurred between 1982 and 1983, when the price dropped from $600.00 to $314.00 per pure gram.

The importance of this finding is that it questions whether supply was increasing--in contradiction to the goals of policymakers--or whether demand was falling, perhaps in response to other exogenous factors. The evidence on drug consumption supports the latter hypothesis.

The War on Drugs of the 1980s was fought as if there was **rising drug use**, particularly among young blacks in our inner cities. Nightly newscasts unwittingly planted into the consciousness of the masses an image of 14 year old crack-cocaine addicts engaging in gunfights with rival gangs. The drug users and the drug dealers in these images were black and Hispanic. This image is challenged by data showing a nationwide decline in the use of most drugs, particularly cocaine, the most widely discussed illegal drug in the nation. These declines, measured in every national survey on record, are real. The same surveys reveal that with the exception of heroin, prevalence of use is lower among blacks than it is among whites.

Figure 4 shows clearly that while the actual prevalence of drug use differs among groups, since the mid-1980s there has been a decline in drug use among young people in the non-institutionalized civilian population. For example, among high school seniors cocaine use, as measured by the percent who used cocaine within the last 12 months, peaked at about 13 percent in 1985. It rose from about 7 percent in 1977 to a little over 12 percent in 1981. After a decline in the early 1980s, cocaine use rose again in 1984. The post-1985 decline appears to have been sharp and continued until 1988, the year

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[3] Peter Reuter and Mark A. R. Kleiman, "Risks and Prices: An Economic Analysis of Drug Enforcement," Vol. 7, in Crime and Justice: An Annual Review of Research, ed. by Michael Tonry and Norval Morris (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1986), pp. 289-340.

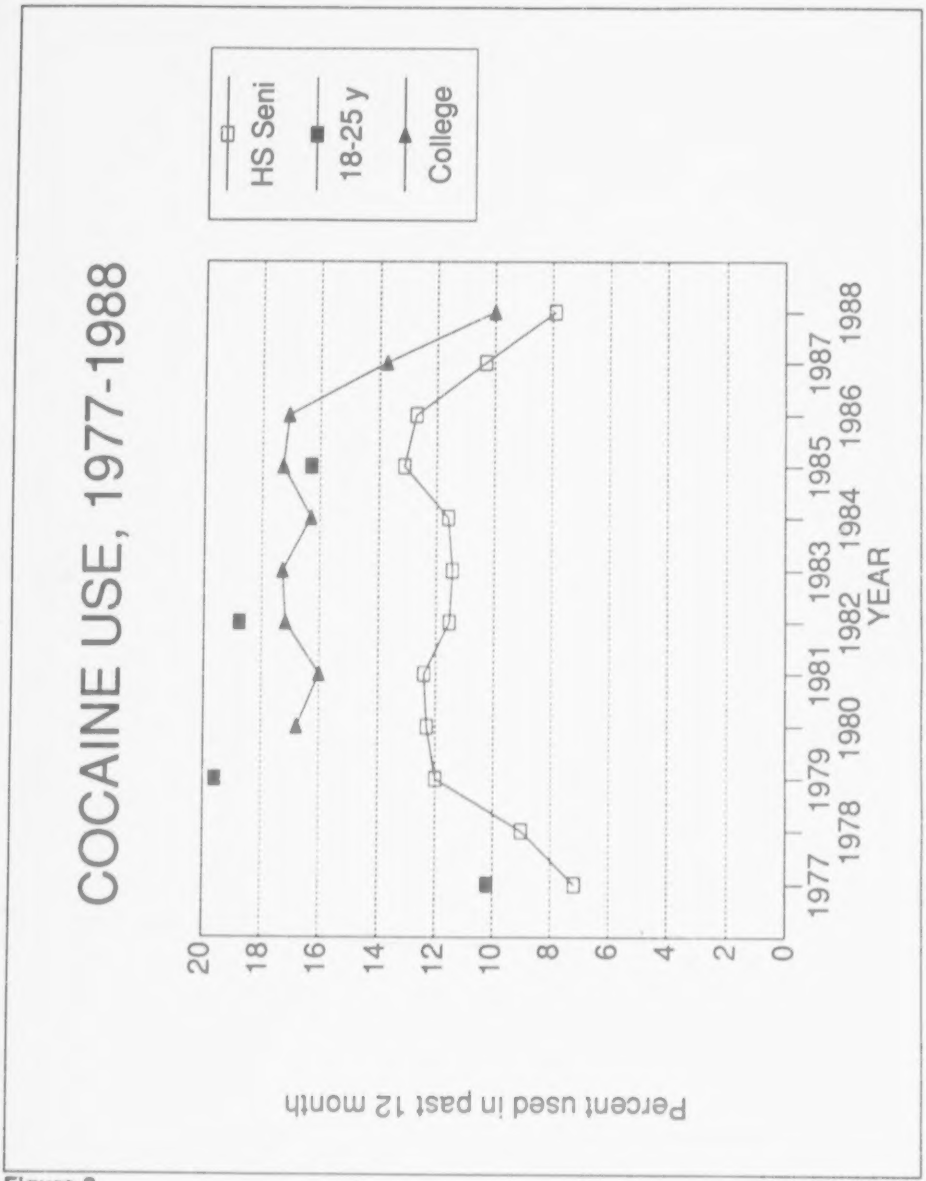
COCAINE USE, 1977-1988
HS Seni
18-25 y
College
Percent used in past 12 month
20
18
16
14
12
10
8
6
4
2
0
1977
1978
1979
1980
1981
1982
1983
1984
1985
1986
1987
1988
YEAR

Figure 3

for which the most recent data were available.[4] Cocaine use among college students, higher than that among high school seniors, also showed a drop in the mid-1980s.[5] Cocaine use among all aged 18-25 years, generally higher than that of the subset of high-school seniors and college students, appeared to peak in the early 1980s and then to decline throughout the mid-1980s.[6] Not including the slight increase in regular hard drug use among criminals from the late 1970s to the 1980s, the patterns of occasional use of cocaine among young people appears clear: there was a sharp reduction in use from the mid-1980s on.[7]

Furthermore, drug use rates tend to be lower among blacks than among whites. While in 1985 12.4 percent of whites reported having ever used cocaine, only 9.9 percent of blacks admitted cocaine use. The gap was narrower for the response to whether cocaine had been used within the past 12 months. For whites the rate was 6.4 percent, for blacks it was 6.2 percent.[8] By 1988 drug use among blacks and whites was down. Whites reported having ever used cocaine at a rate of 10.8 percent; the rate for blacks was 9.3 percent.[9] This racial differential in prevalence of drug use is replicated for most other drugs and alcohol as well. It confirms, moreover, that the decline in occasional drug use occurred in both the black and white communities.

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[4] U.S. Department of Justice, Drugs and Crime Facts, 1989, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1990), p. 17. For discussion of sample design and the reliability and validity of responses, and compilation of data, see U. S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics' Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics, 1988, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1990), Table 3.74 p. 356. The original source is U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institute of Drug Abuse, Illicit Drug Use, Smoking, and Drinking by America's High School Students, College Students, and Young Adults, 1975-1987, by L. D. Johnson, P. O'Malley, and J. G. Bachman. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1989.

[5] Data for college students come from the same study as for high school seniors, as a part of a follow-up survey of respondents 1-4 years out of high school.

[6] Data come from U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institute of Drug Abuse, National Household Survey on Drug Abuse, 1988 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1990) and earlier years. Survey results refer to the years 1977, 1979, 1982, 1985 and 1988. Intervening years were extrapolated. An important distinction exists between the NIDA estimates of young adult drug use and the previously discussed estimates based on high school seniors and the follow-up surveys. The young adult population in the NIDA is derived from a national probability sample of households in the United States and excludes persons living in group quarters or institutions. Thus, it excludes persons living in college dormitories, as well as those in jail or prison, transients and the homeless. The Illicit Drug Use survey (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1989) includes high school graduates 1 to 10 years beyond high school. Thus, it includes college students as well as those living in dormitories. Since data on the latter measure are only available for 1986 and 1987, the former measure is used in figure 1.

[7] There is no comparable time series on criminal drug use. Two surveys of state prisoners, however, yield estimates of hard drug use in 1979 and 1986. These surveys show that regular hard drug use rose from 33.4 percent in 1979 to 35 percent in 1986. Bureau of Justice Statistics, Sourcebook, Table 6.44, p. 623.

[8] Ibid., 3.92, 366.

Why did consumption decline? It is difficult to say. Yet, at least one important change may explain why fewer buyers ventured into the streets to purchase these drugs in the second half of the decade: street-level risks increased substantially.

The risks associated with street-level drug sales affect not only buyer behavior but also profit opportunities for sellers. Figure 5 shows that drug arrests per 100,000 population soared from about 250 in 1979 to 400 in 1987. After a brief decline during the late 1970s the arrest rate for drug abuse violations increased steadily throughout the 1980s.[10]

Among blacks, drug arrests exploded. While about 100,000 blacks were arrested for drug abuse violations in 1980, almost 350,000 were arrested for these crimes by 1988. These numbers, however, do not reveal the shift in the proportion of all black arrests that are attributable to drug abuse violations. Figure 6 shows that this proportion rose form less than 6 percent in 1980 to more than 11 percent in 1988. This compares to proportions among whites that rose from less than 6 percent in 1980 to a little more than 7 percent in 1988. Thus, even though black drug use was falling, black arrests for drug abuse rose dramatically and the share of all arrests due to drug abuse--one identical for whites and blacks--soon almost doubled.

Yet, just as coke prices have fallen, demand has dropped and the risks have escalated, the relative attractiveness of illegitimate activities among young black males has surged. Figure 7 displays the ratio of black to total median weekly earnings among full-time, year-round employees among males ages 16 to 24. In 1979 the median weekly earnings of full-time, employed black males 16-24 was $167.00. For all men, it was $291.00. The ratio equalled .57388. By 1987, the median earnings for black males 16-24 rose to $214.00. Yet, the median earnings of all men who worked full-time and year-round rose to $433.00. Thus, the ratio fell to .49422. In the decade of the 1980s, this measure of the earnings potential of young black males deteriorated.

The increased relative attractiveness of the drug trade for young black males

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[9] National Institute of Drug Abuse, National Household Survey, Table 4-B, p. 30.

[10] Drug abuse violations include state and local offenses relating to the unlawful possession, sale, use, growth, and manufacture of narcotic drugs. In 1988, the rate rose again to 449.9 per 100,000 inhabitants. In that year 27.4 percent of those arrests were for the illegal sale or manufacture of narcotic drugs; the remaining 72.6 percent of arrests were for possession. The vast majority of sale or manufacture arrests were for heroin, cocaine and their derivatives. U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reports for the United States, 1988, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1989) pp. 167-169, p. 320.

DRUG ARREST RATES

1977 - 1987

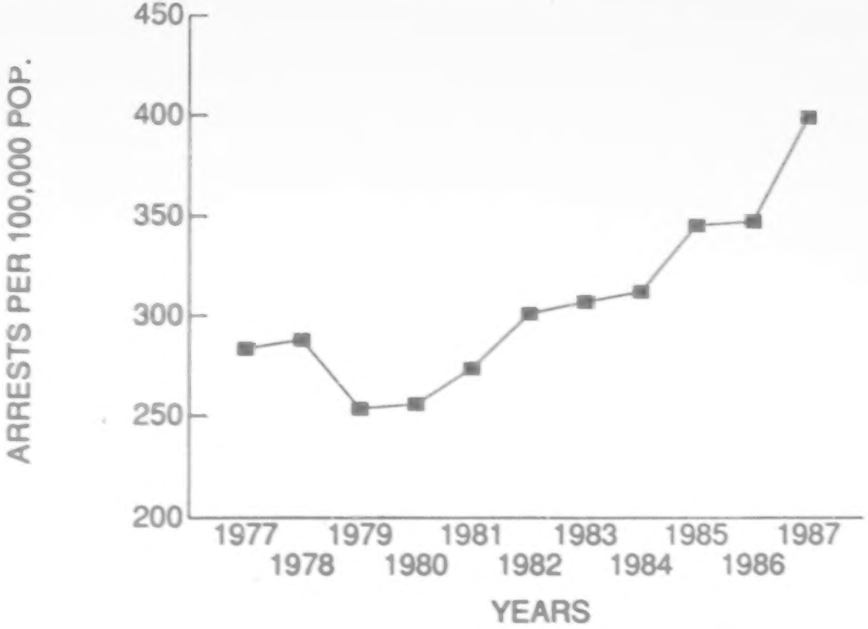

Figure 4

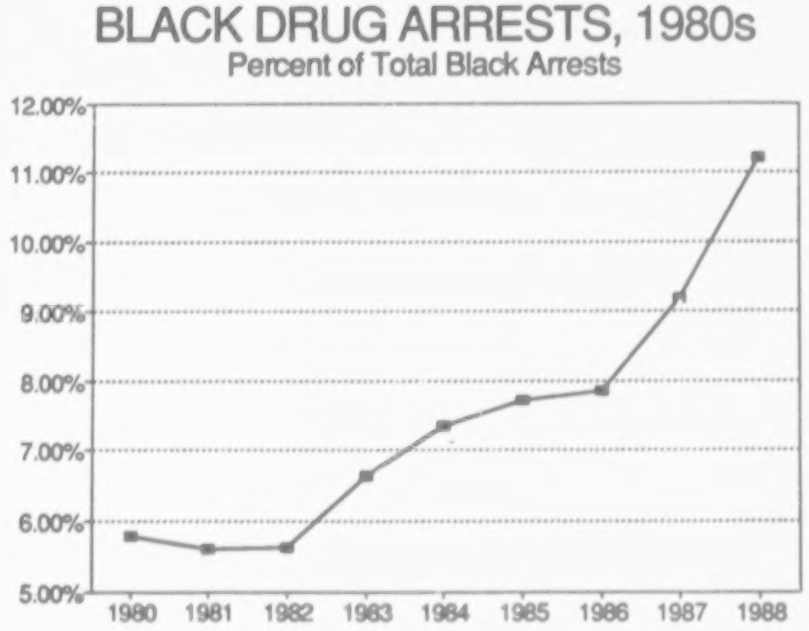
BLACK DRUG ARRESTS, 1980s
Percent of Total Black Arrests
12.00%
11.00%
10.00%
9.00%
8.00%
7.00%
6.00%
5.00%
1980
1981
1982
1983
1984
1985
1986
1987
1988

**Figure 5**

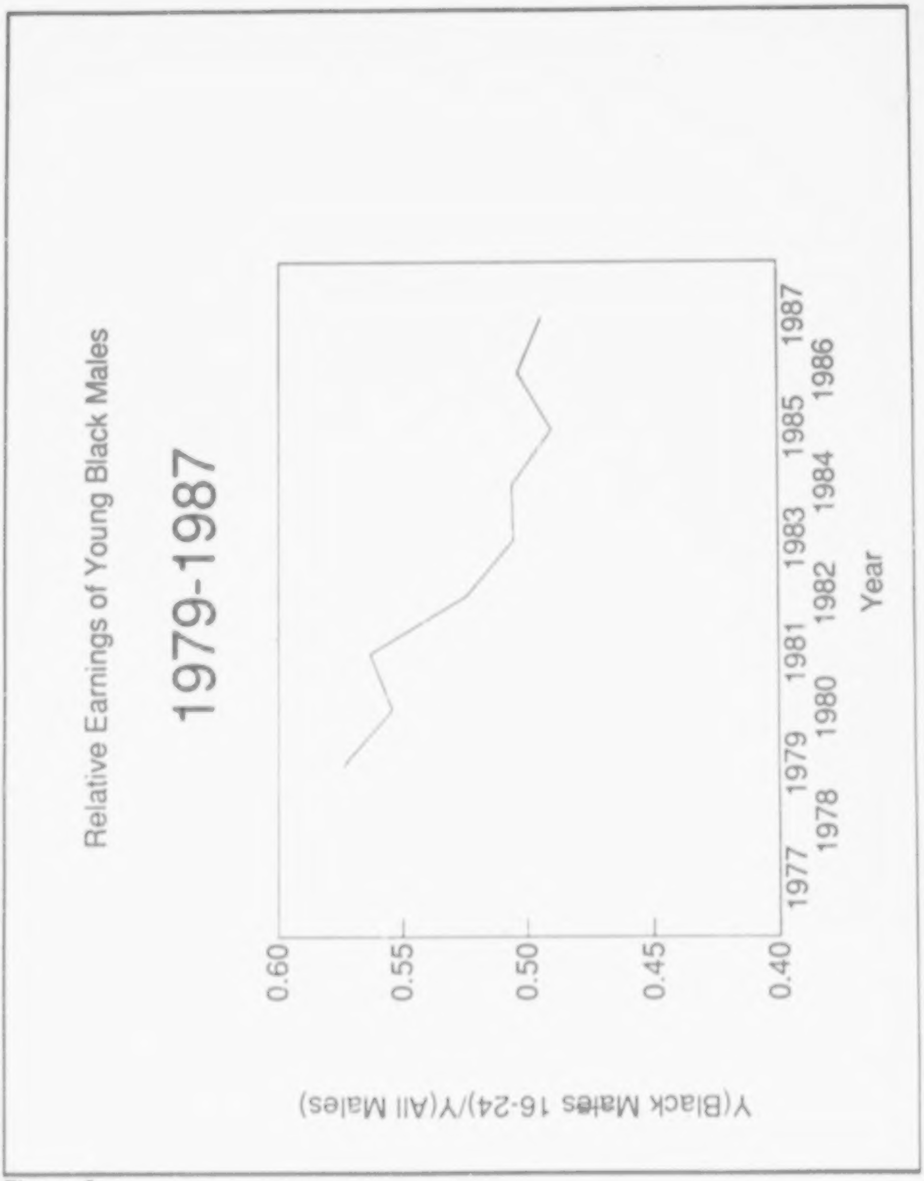
Relative Earnings of Young Black Males
1979-1987
Y(Black Males 16-24)/Y(All Males)
0.60
0.55
0.50
0.45
0.40
1977
1978
1979
1980
1981
1982
1983
1984
1985
1986
1987
Year

Figure 6

cannot be the low risks, the high profits, or increased demand for these drugs: the risks are rising, prices and presumably profits are falling, and demand has dropped. The attractiveness of drug trade must arise from the relative decline in legitimate employment.

However, the street-level price of cocaine is another indicator of the potential returns to drug dealing. Assuming the costs remain constant for dealing drugs--the purchasing from intermediate-level suppliers, and related risks--a fall in the street-level price of drugs will reduce the profitability of drug dealing. The drop in cocaine consumption shown in Figure 4 is consistent with a fall in drug demand that could explain the decline in drug prices; the increase in drug arrests could also explain the fall in drug demand, contributing to a decline in street-level prices. Together with the increased risks to sellers due to increased drug arrests, the fall in drug prices at the street-level suggests a reduction in the profitability of the drug trade, at least to street-level sellers.

How, then, does one interpret anecdotal evidence of escalating involvement by young black males in street-level sales of such drugs as crack and cocaine? The drug trade, it seems, has become less profitable in recent years because of the decline in demand, the increase in risks, and the fall in street-level prices. All other things being equal, fewer new sellers should be entering this market, not more.

Of course, these data are not inconsistent with a world in which casual users reduce their consumption, while addicts--facing a more inelastic demand but subject to the same market prices as casual users--increase their consumption. Why? Because of price declines. Thus, even if our intended policy had been one of demand reduction among casual users (or, "Just say No!") one of the unintended consequences would have been an increase in addictions.

## Black Employment v. Drug Dealing[11]

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[11] This section is based on my paper, "Crime, Entrepreneurship, and Labor Force Withdrawal," June, 1990, presented at the 65th Annual Western Economic Association Conference, June 29-July 3, 1990, San Diego, California.

The data for the analysis come from the Rand Inmate Survey. This survey was administered in 1978 and 1979 to convicted male inmates at 12 prisons and 14 county jails in California, Michigan and Texas. It examines three time windows to access criminal activities. The windows include the 12 month period immediately before the arrest for which the inmate was incarcerated, the two-year period before that, and two additional years before that. Basic background variables and a series of measures of attitudes about crime are available as well.

The background characteristics of the inmate sample mirror those of prisoners nationally: 45 percent were black, 19 percent Hispanics, Asians and Native Americans, 22 percent completed less than the 10th grade, 35 percent completed some high school, 18 percent were high school graduates, and 22 percent had completed schooling beyond high school, including college; and 20 percent were married.
Inmates were asked if they used certain drugs before they were age 18. We recoded responses of frequent use of LSD, psychedelics, cocaine, uppers, downers, or heroin as "hard drug use". Twenty-five

Analyses of the relationship between drug dealing and employment show that the relative attractiveness of illicit drug sales as compared to legal work is the central determinant of entry into this activity. For black males, whose wages are low and whose odds of being unemployed are high, drug selling, even with the greater risks of getting caught, could yield higher returns than work.

Using a unique sample of incarcerated offenders who provided retrospective insights into their criminal and legal earnings, I have derived measures of expected legal and illegal wages; the ratio of these two is a measure of the expected relative returns to work.[12] The results of these estimations yield a ratio of about .75, suggesting that for our sample legal wages were only about three-quarters of illegal wages. The average legal wage for those who worked was nearly $700.00 per month, or a little more than $4.00 per hour.

Black males, however, had lower relative legal wages and lower employment probabilities. Blacks had a ratio of expected legal earnings to illegal earnings of only .33462; for whites it was .89234. While 68.06 percent of blacks worked in the previous year, slightly more whites worked. Their employment rate was 78.03 percent.

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percent of the respondents admitted to frequent hard drug use before they were age 18. Another 19 percent claimed that they never used any drugs, including marijuana, before they were 18. They were also asked about drug dealing (making, selling, smuggling or moving drugs) in several time frames. Sixty percent admitted to dealing drugs in the 12 months before their arrest. Of those, 68.4 percent claimed to have made 11 or more deals. Asked to describe themselves during the period before their arrests, 21 percent stated that they thought of themselves as drug dealers. Of all respondents, 34 percent reported dealing hard drugs at some time in the 12 months before arrest.

These data, drawn from the late 1970s, are consistent with more recent data. In surveys of victims, about a quarter of violent criminal incidents where the offender was under 20 were perpetrated by criminals perceived to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs. While about three-quarters of jail and prison inmates admitted to ever using drugs in their lifetimes--a drug use prevalence that vastly exceeds reported use in the general population--only about 17 percent claimed they were under the influence of drugs at the time they committed the offense for which they were sentenced. Among state prisoners in 1986, 19 percent admitted to using hard drugs daily in the month before their arrest.

The major difference between the self-reported data and other sources comes from the drug dealing end of the equation. Whereas self-reported drug use among criminal populations is about what one can expect to glean from other data, self-reported drug dealing is considerably more prevalent than what emerges in the official data. Only about 26.1 percent of state prison inmates with no prior sentences were incarcerated for drug dealing in 1986, up somewhat from earlier years. Yet, in 1978-79 more than six-tenths of all inmates in our sample admitted that they had dealt drugs at some time in the 12 months before they were arrested. This suggests considerable undetected drug activity and is confirmed in our calculation of the ratio of drug arrests to admitted drug sales per street month. It is an astonishingly low .005--for those with drug sales. If this ratio is to be regarded as a measure of the riskiness of illegal drug activity, then one can only conclude that this is as riskfree a criminal enterprise as one can find.

[12] Results of these reduced form equations are available from the author.

Estimates of the impacts that these low relative returns to work have on drug dealing show a remarkable consistency. Increases in the relative returns to work significantly reduce black males' participation in drug dealing. Since there has been a drastic decline in the returns to work over the decade, this means that less attractive employment options faced by blacks are at the root of increased drug dealing even when drug dealing is becoming less profitable. A one percent increase in the ratio of expected legal to illegal earnings **reduced** the probability of dealing drugs by about 1.5 percent. This very elastic response suggests that one important route towards drug dealing, even in the face of falling drug prices, is the exit from legal employment where relative earnings for blacks are low.

## Conclusions

It is useful to summarize the key mistakes of policy that have contributed to the present crisis of young black males. First, we focused on weaknesses instead of strengths. Labor market strategies devoted to increasing the basic skills of nearly illiterate and poorly motivated school dropouts were well-intentioned--and still needed for some, if not many, disadvantaged non-labor force participants. Yet, when they ignore the obvious advantages of capitalization on client assets they are bound to fail. In the instance of many young black males who have chosen to seek their fortunes in crime and drugs, the asset is entrepreneurial acumen.

Second, criminal justice policies--fueled in part by public opinion--have tended to favor incapacitation and specific deterrence strategies over rehabilitation and job-development approaches. At the start of the decade, educational, job development and general purpose rehabilitation programs were discredited as ineffective means for combating crime. Incapacitation, we were told, was the only way to curb the criminal output of the few who committed the most serious crimes against persons and property. We sought additional prison space to house these culprits, and when legislatures failed to authorize sufficient funds, we crowded offenders in still more crimogenic conditions and often were forced to release lesser criminals back on the streets. The irony is that prisons--always the best of systems for higher *criminal* education--turned out more graduates facing even bleaker legitimate earnings opportunities.

The Chairman. I do not know if your name tag is facing where the cameras are, but we just heard from Dr. Sam Myers, Jr., and you are exactly right.

What is new is that some attention is being paid to problems that we have had, in one form or another, for a long time.

Although it would seem to me, and correct me if I am wrong, that the data in many respects is worsening.

I think it relates in part to the almost captive conditions of urban American, in many instances.

And where all the factors start to play back and forth with each other with respect to what happens when you put these dynamics in urban centers that are otherwise in trouble because these gaps seem to be widening.

As I look at the data, the data is becoming more discouraging. Correct me if I am wrong. That is what I tend to draw from it.

So I am wondering, not only what do we do to change these dynamics and change these trend lines, but what is it that seems to be making a bad situation even worse than it has been?

That is in my mind a very troubling emerging reality. It is new, but it is not new.

The dimensions of the problem I think, because they are growing at such an alarming rate, there is that element of newness to it.

But you are exactly right, these are problems we should have been awake to as a society long before the present time.

But help us, if you can, with respect to the urban center and how that is both being affected by this problem, and how it is affecting this data that we are seeing here as we try to think through the question here of some semblance of strategy and discussion on urban strategy where so much of this problem is now occurring.

How do we begin to understand it?

How do we need to reengineer some things, take some things apart, put some things back together differently?

Yes, Dr. Glasgow.

## STATEMENT OF DR. DOUGLAS GLASGOW, SCHOLAR, WASHINGTON, DC

Dr. Glasgow. Mr. Chairman, if I may first express how pleased I am to have been asked to participate in this very important Senate hearing.

In many respects, this may be a very momentous agenda item for the Senate of the United States.

I am so pleased that you as Chairman of this Banking Committee and your colleagues, particularly Senator Sanford, have sought to put this issue on the agenda of the American public with a view toward facilitating legislation and programs to respond to the most horrendous crisis condition of a portion of the people—namely, black males—in America.

And while this Congressional action is of extreme importance, I would not like to minimize that at all.

It has tremendous potential.

The Congressional action to me magnifies the deep concern with the future of these proceedings as they portend to the future of the African-American community, as well as America itself.

Mr. Chairman, it appears to me that black men are at the core that sets and contours the shape of Black America.

As Dr. Myers just finished saying, the condition of black men is not one framed only today. It is a longstanding history.

I was so pleased to hear your reference to that horrible piece of history of the African-American people being ripped from the homeland and subjected to such a tortuous ordeal in the passage from Africa to the United States.

That is part of the African-American history.

The other part of that history is the institutionalization of a most peculiar institution.

That peculiar institution of course is slavery in America, unique both in its structure from all other systems of slavery throughout the world, and truly it has had a lasting impact for any system which has been geared to destroy the very fiber of a people, to deprive them of their culture, to deprive them of their language, to deprive them of the normalcy of family relationships, to denigrate its men and to violate its females portends to a long history of suffering of that people, a legacy which is devastatingly a part of our history.

I am sure that in the course of these hearings we will hear a broad range of fact.

I think that is important that we are in the age where data seems to support whatever argument you give.

I am sure there will be much data, and the significance will be shared with this committee today, and in subsequent hearings.

Yet, when placed in its proper perspective, the data that contours the life circumstances of black males in America discloses a very horrendous mural of suffering, of dislocation, and of loss, and yet of indomitable strength.

For while the black population is approximately 12 percent of America and black males constitute 49 percent of the black population of America, black males constitute a disproportionate proportion of those out of work, unemployed, underemployed.

And, again, this is not only a matter of statistics of unemployment.

But, as pointed out by Dr. Swinton, in a recent report, "The State of Black America," he examines this inequality over a period of the last two decades from the 1970's through 1979, and into the next decade 1980 through 1989, in which he documents the condition of inequality.

That does not stop at those on the bottom of the ladder, for even among those who earn substantial income, and are part of the black middle class, black men earn significantly less than those comparable white males performing those types of jobs.

So that the inequality does not only portend to those who are lowest on the economic scale, but it is a phenomenon that is present in the total economic structure of black males in America.

The limited economic solvency of the black male has an important effect on the overall community.

And of course, it has its greatest, as Dr. Height earlier informed us, on the structure and function of the family.

For a number of years, we've placed great emphasis on single parented female-headed households, and often being rather critical of this development.

It's surprising to see recently, in the New York Times, indications are that that structure of families is becoming more common in all of America today.

But when we speak of the single parented female-headed household, it does appear to me that there are a number of phenomena that are connected with that, aside from the issues of morality—in addition to—I'm sorry, in addition to some of the issues of sex and morality, there is also the fact that of sexism that works to keep these families poor.

For, if you look at all of your data, not only are black males subjugated in the economic ladder, but black females even more so.

The latest economic quarterly report of the National Urban League speaks to that differentiation. And it's black females suffer off the scale, primarily because of being both black and being female.

They carry a double oppressive impact.

And hence, when they are the sole earners for our families, our families are poorer.

I take that to say that, in our deliberations, one of the factors which we must begin to examine is, how do we reconnect black males again to the black family.

For it is not only an important moral issue, and it is, it is a social, functional issue as well, as it has very sound economic potential.

For to put black males into families, increases the economy of those families.

And while we know, as we look at the economics, we will find recently numbers of black males who stay at the lower end of the economic plane, we can begin to say, or at least project that, if you combine a $9,000 or $10,000 income with a $6,000 or $7,000 income, you're beginning to deal with at least a viable income level, which is important to elevating the economic level.

There are a number of other problems.

I don't wish to take the time to go through them now.

I'm sure we will.

But I'd just like to point to one which is most devastating to the equilibrium of the African-American community.

It's the absence of large portions of black men from social functioning in community life, itself.

The more recent report that identified that one in every four black men were in prison and that over half a million black males are concentrated in the Nation's prison system, and incidentally, that 23 percent are held in the Federal jurisdiction, these data speak to a phenomenal process.

This is a process that depletes males from participation in the life activity of the African-American community.

It is precisely this disequilibrium that almost predictably forecasts dysfunction within the community.

Historically, we know that the tradition which says eliminate males from functioning within any community weakens the capacity of that community to survive.

I think that while we have spoken and particularly the marvelous Governor here, identified some of the problems which I'd like to think are reflective of the mark of oppression, the patricide that takes place within a community, and the dysfunction that does portend to the family.

I would like to suggest that, first and foremost, we, who are looking at this problem, the challenge of this male issue is great.

It's important.

It seems to me that no question holds more importance toward assuring the improved larger American condition than the improved psychosocial and economic state of black males in America.

To progressively change the status of black males is to increase the vitality and capacity of a self-sustaining Afro-American community.

It speaks to the immediate improvement of the condition of black families, and it speaks to significantly enhancing the chances of young black male children to emulate and hence to increase their potential to successful achievement.

In essence, the restoration of black [illegible] to vital and equal participatory roles in the black community, in the end, would strength the Nation's total social fabric.

There is much that we can learn from past congressional activities, Mr. Chairman.

We need but examine the actions that were generated by Congress with respect to female-headed households that are disproportionately black and poor.

From the early 1970's, we were alerted to this phenomenon.

It would be wise for us to examine this phenomenon and, particularly, examine the national action that was taken for these families.

History will show that while we need greater attention from our Federal sector, and from the public sector, there need not be a repetition of those things we know did not work in that initiative.

For it is clear that while social workers, sociologists, and other human service analysts identified the field, the scope, the population of needy poor and black families, the growth of these families has not decreased.

The extent of the poverty has not decreased, and the institutional impact of social programs has been infinitesimal.

It is my hope, Mr. Chairman, that the work of this Commission and its ultimate actions in Congress must focus greater attention on new ways to distribute the resources of whatever the solutions upheld, in a way that uses, undergirds and strengthens the infrastructure capacity of the African-American community, itself to take that task on, to restore the balance, the vital needed participation of black men in the African-American community.

That's my statement.

The **Chairman**. Thank you very much.

Dr. Glasgow, I should note, offered a much read and much admired book called "The Black Under Class."

We appreciate very much those observations.

I wanted to acknowledge Senator Sasser, who has joined us some time back.

Senator Sasser, did you have comment to make at this time?

## OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR SASSER

Senator Sasser. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I simply want to express my appreciation to you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this very important roundtable hearing this morning.

I think this forum presents a welcome opportunity for open discussion of the plight of the Afro-American men in urban society.

And I also want to compliment, Mr. Chairman, Senator Sanford for his efforts in bringing this issue before our Committee today.

And for his leadership in the Twenty-First Century Commission on African-American Males.

I'm particularly pleased to see the very able Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia here today.

And we're honored by your presence, Governor.

And we're also honored by the presence of these very distinguished scholars and leaders in the business community.

The statistics show that the problems of high school dropouts, unemployment, poverty, drug abuse, crime and incarceration are highest for black males. However, I don't think that any one of us in this room today has to rely on statistics to know there is a crisis for black males, in urban areas in particular.

These problems result in many black males holding little hope or ambition for their future. If their problems are continued to be ignored, then they will continue to scare our society.

We must find the lost generations of black males and work to prevent further lost generations. Black males need to be prepared for the workforce and for participation in society. This means we need to intervene early in the lives of black males to instill the work ethic and family values.

I believe that it is the role of this committee to look at how these men can become part of the productive force of our Nation. They represent a resource for growth that should be tapped to contribute to the economic well-being and competitiveness of this country.

Today we have the opportunity to examine the problems afflicting black males and to find solutions. I look forward to hearing the testimony of the distinguished panel of witnesses.

If I could make just one final comment, Mr. Chairman?

I am very much aware of the plight of the Afro-American male in our society, as a result of some of my activities in my native State of Tennessee, and particularly in Memphis, TN.

There, we are making some efforts, although they are inadequate, I would confess, at the present time, we are making efforts there, through Headstart, through Big Brother, through Boys Clubs, through the Martin Luther King Cultural Center, and through the LeMoine Owens College, of which my wife sits on the board of that college, to offer programs for young black men, including job training, attitude training for the workplace, which I think is very important, for basic sex education, and training on how to be a parent.

All of these things are basic, and I think are necessary for the success of young males.

And we're undertaking that in Memphis. And we've had some success, although the programs need to be expanded very dramatically.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Sasser.

At this point I want to insert a statement from Senator Dixon for the record.

STATEMENT BY SENATOR ALAN J. DIXON

Senator DIXON. Mr. Chairman, first, I want to congratulate you for calling this roundtable hearing to discuss an issue of importance to this country, "The Plight of African-American Men in Urban America." This issue must be addressed if we intend to resolve many of our inner-city problems from an urban affairs perspective.

Additionally, I want to give recognition to the Senator from North Carolina, Senator Sanford, who, I understand, called to the chairman's attention, the need for this hearing.

I also understand that testimony from this hearing and recommendations from this committee will serve as a basis for action to be taken later by the 21st century commission on African-American males, a non-legislative body which Senator Sanford co-chairs.

As you know so well Mr. Chairman, this committee realizes the value of such roundtable discussions. It was some 4 years ago before this very body that similar hearings were held on the need to reform our housing programs. Those roundtable discussions produced the framework which this committee used to develop the recently enacted Cranston-Gonzalez National Affordable Housing Act.

Mr. Chairman, I look forward to the testimony from this distinguished panel. I feel confident that its members will assist our committee in examining the magnitude of the problems hindering the advancement of black males in American Society.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. I'm going to ask Senator Sanford, if he would, to pose the next question.

Senator SANFORD. I don't want to oversimplify this problem.

But as we read your testimony, which will be filed, and other testimony, in evidence, and documents that will come in from time to time, we get back to a basic question of, where are the starting points.

I thought Dr. Spencer made a very good point.

One of the starting points is to get a better scientific base and a broader knowledge about what caused this problem, and how do you handle it.

That's very well taken, but it's not the starting point.

Because we can't wait for that.

So there are many starting points.

Let me tell you a little bit about why I think we are here today, quite aside from the fact that this is a very crucial, fundamental need for the Nation to give attention to.

I had a young woman on my staff named Kathy Wellman.

She brought me a report that was issued by the The Sentencing Project under your supervision, MARC.

This report, published in 1990, indicated two things.

I've been concerned with South Africa for a long time, and I have hoped that we could do something to help that situation.

I knew there wasn't a lot we could do from here but I remain very concerned about it.

Your report said there were more black males incarcerated here, than in the entire country of South Africa.

Your report also said that one in four black males are in prison, jail, probation or parole.

Now, I want to ask you to ponder the question of, what we can do about it.

And maybe focus on what we can do about them while they are incarcerated or on probation or on parole.

Can this situation somehow be turned into something positive.

Now, Kathy Wellman quit my staff shortly after giving me this report, and upsetting me.

She quit to help organize the Commission on Afro-American Males. It was her inspiration and her planning for this Commission, and her carrying through of the work of this Commission that has made it possible, I think, for us to be here today.

I'd like Kathy Wellman to stand. [Applause.]

Now, I want you to tell us what we can do and where a starting point could be.

Mr. **Mauer**. Thank you, Senator.

It seems to me, if we want to look at what directions we need to change our policies or our programs, or the whole course of events, I think we need to take a look at why we have such a shocking situation.

Why black males are incarcerated at a greater rate than they are in South Africa.

That's particularly for young black men in the control of the criminal justice system.

Another issue raised in our report, as you know, is that we found that the United States is now the world leader in its rate of incarceration.

We surpassed South Africa and the Soviet Union in the past decade.

Now we are the highest incarcerator of any known nation in the world, and that's rather a dubious distinction.

It seems to me, if you want to look at why we have these shocking rates of criminal justice control, I think there are two main places to look.

First, why are young black men committing crime in the first place.

Second, what is the response of our criminal justice system.

When we look at crime, we need to look beyond just young black men.

We need to look at young men, in general, because young men are the ones who commit crime in very disproportionate numbers.

Our response to their crimes is very different, depending on their race and class.

The white middle class teenagers who are out, getting into trouble, and various kinds of things, their behavior is much more likely to come to the attention of a social worker, teacher, minister or counselor, than the young black man whose behavior is more likely to come to the attention of the police.

And we're starting, at that point, a whole labeling process, a whole funneling process that's almost a guaranteed ticket of admission to the adult prison system a few years down the road.

So I think we need to look at these class and race distinctions together.

As we know, blacks are disproportionately low income, so we have a whole area of poverty that we need to examine.

Many people, I believe, have oversimplified the relationship between poverty and crime.

We know that not all poor people commit crime, just as we know that not all wealthy people refrain from committing crime.

But we do know there is a link, that for some poor people, it's the lack of adequate income, the temptations of living in a materialist society, the thrill of getting something, the need to participate somehow, by having an income, that will lead some of them to commit crimes.

I think, perhaps, the most substantial factor and perhaps the most important is a lack of hope for the future that is so pervasive among so many low-income young people today.

We often hear people say that, well, there are jobs, you know, and young people can always get a job working in fast food. It's a way to get started.

I think there's a world of difference between the college student who's taking a summer off to go work in a fast food restaurant, knowing that he or she is going back to college, and that 5 or 10 years from now, he or she is going to be a professional doing quite well for themselves.

That's very different from the high school dropout who is asked to take a job knowing that in 5 or 10 years, at best, he may still be working there, and may have moved up one rung on the ladder.

It's a very different kind of experience.

So we have to look at all these basic factors.

I think we've seen though, that what is very critical on top of that, is during the past decade in particular, our criminal justice policies actually have had a tremendous impact on this whole problem, on the lives of young black men.

We've doubled the number of young black men behind bars in the last decade, just as we've also, by the way, doubled the number of young white men and young Hispanic men behind bars.

We have twice as many people in our prisons and jails as we did just 10 years ago.

Now, you can look at the crime rate and the victimization rates, and all the data we have. They do not explain why we've had a doubling of the incarcerated population.

I believe that the reason we've had the doubling is because of our criminal justice policies, the so-called "get tough" movement which has taken place through a whole range of policies, and legislation that we've adopted at a Federal and State level.

This includes mandatory minimum sentences, lengthier sentencing, the Federal sentencing guidelines, cutbacks in parole and good time. All these policies serve to send more people to prison and keep them there.

I think probably the most critical, and again, particularly with regard to the black community, is the whole war on drugs and the direction that we, as a Nation, have taken in the war on drugs.

We're not engaged in a war on drug use; we're engaged in a war on low-income drug use, primarily.

If we look at FBI arrest data and various kinds of information like that, what we find is that the black proportion of drug arrests actually has been increasing at a dramatic rate during this period from 1984 to 1989.

The black proportion of drug arrests went from 30 percent to 41 percent in a 5-year period.

This does not necessarily correlate with the percent of black drug use in the population.

So I think we decided, in a conscious or not-so-conscious way, that we were going to wage war on drugs, primarily through law enforcement, primarily by having more police, prosecutors, and prisons.

And once we do that, the targets, by and large, whether it's conscious or not, are going to be young, black men.

Part of it is because their drug use is more visible because they may be hanging out in the school playground. They're more likely to get picked up by the police who are patrolling the neighborhood than suburbanites are, or people in corporate law offices are, who may be using illegal substances, too.

So we have a whole set of policies, I believe, that have locked up this generation of young black men.

Some people would say, well, the purpose of this is to control crime, and that's why we've done it.

And it's a painful price to pay, both in tax dollars and in terms of human lives.

We have very little to show in the way of crime control for these policies of the last 10 years.

We had high rates of crimes 10 years ago, and we have high rates of crime today.

And I think there's a very serious opportunity cost to these policies.

The billions of dollars a year we're spending to lock people up has not been spent to address the reasons why these people are committing the crimes in the first place.

And I think that's where we need to focus some of our attention.

We need to look in the criminal justice system, at which offenders need to be imprisoned, which offenders can be supervised in the community, whether the best way to deal with a person who has a substance abuse problem is to put that person in jail, or put that person in a treatment program.

I think this whole set of issues is the direction we need to start looking.

The CHAIRMAN. Can I just ask a question at that point?

And it's sort of off your main point.

But we've all been very struck by this video tape of this police brutality episode.

I think that's too gentle a word for it, that we saw in Los Angeles.

Let me just ask everyone around the table.

In terms of the implications or the kind of attitudes that we saw obviously manifested in that situation, but that's certainly not an isolated incident, we've got case after case all over the country that are being brought forward and looked at in various ways, but I'm wondering how does that fit into this puzzle?

I was just reading a couple of excerpts in the paper this morning about apparently the phrases that were being used by the police officers as they were chasing this man.

And I mean, it's almost unbelievable.

It's like a horror movie.

To try to conceptualize and deal with that video tape, and now what we know of the feelings and the expressed opinions of the people who were literally beating this man to death.

And he's just lucky that he's alive?

Dr. MYERS. We were lulled into complacency in the 1980's, lulled into believing that the problems that once existed in the 1960's, of severe police brutality, were no longer a problem.

Part of the complacency arose from the fact that there was a significant increase in the portion of the police chiefs who were black, and a significant increase in the number of black policemen and patrolmen.

We thought we'd solved the problem.

Moreover, the black community was overwhelmingly behind the idea of fighting this war on drugs.

And if it meant arresting people who were terrorizing the streets, we felt that, yes, let's do it.

Now, we have police departments that continue the practices of strike law enforcement. The complacency that existed through the 1980's where we redirected our attention away from the presumption that the problems of crime and drugs were problems of society, as opposed to problems of individual blacks whose morality and upbringing had deteriorated—caused us to believe that we would place our faith and continued support behind our police officers.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes.

What I should do here as we move around, we've got a national audience attempting to follow this.

Either I should identify everyone as they speak, or they should identify themselves.

And I apologize, because I've missed on a couple of occasions.

But, Mr. Williams, you serve as President of the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies here in Washington, DC.

We're pleased to hear from you.

## EDDIE WILLIAMS, PRESIDENT, JOINT CENTER FOR POLITICAL STUDIES, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. WILLIAMS. Thank you, sir.

I'm pleased to serve as an honorary board member of the Commission on African-American Males, and to have an opportunity to be here today. I want to commend all of you who have taken on this very important undertaking.

I wanted to remind us of something.

In 1972, in his highly acclaimed book, "The Invisible Man," Ralph Ellison declared, angrily: "I am an invisible man because people simply refuse to see me."

One becomes invisible through dehumanization.

One becomes invisible through joblessness.

One becomes invisible through a lack of respect and dashed hopes and failed dreams; through inadequate opportunities, in education and health care, for example.

With a problem so complex where and how do we begin?

We begin by solving some of these specific problems.

And this is indeed the appropriate committee, dealing with urban policy, to focus on many specific aspects of these problems.

I personally would not expect that there would ever be a policy for young black males, but rather that in public policies dealing with employment and education, for example, we acknowledge and be sensitive to the problems of young black males as we try to formulate our programmatic solutions.

As Dr. Myers mentioned earlier, this is indeed an old problem. One thing that's new is the elevation of this problem to the level of this august body. And for that, I am deeply appreciative, because it's only in this way that we sincerely communicate to the American people the nature and extent of the problem, as we seek to develop a national will to do something about it. This means, among other things, committing resources and leadership to help solve the problem.

It is no surprise to me that the attention to this subject coincides with our Nation's focus on new urban poverty or what has been unfortunately characterized as "the urban underclass."

In many respects, these two concerns—the plight of young black males and the urban underclass—are aspects of the same problems: lack of respect, joblessness, poor education, and so forth.

These problems emerge in our society at the same time as we are seeing rather significant demographic changes that portend implications for our labor force and indeed for many aspects of our society.

So this is, indeed, an important time and this is indeed a critical place for the discussion to take place.

Much of the data on young black males is illuminating. Some of it is uneven in quality. Some of it is in controversy, and certainly much, much more needs to be known. That is a crucial service this committee can perform.

I would also urge, though, that as we pay attention to this important subject, that we not allow this Commission or the Senate or the Congress to do things to make the problem worse by isolating young black males and by emphasizing their negative behaviors, and thereby stigmatizing them.

We run the risk of stigmatizing a group of people who in the eyes of the larger society can be rendered invisible, can be castigated and ignored.

So it is important, I think, that you and Senator Sanford continue to emphasize the positive aspects of black males, as well.

Mr. Chairman, I apologize for having to leave this hearing now because I have to go to a luncheon meeting at the Joint Center.

But I look forward to participating in the May conference and to taking part in the work of this Commission.

The CHAIRMAN. I'm struck, you know, by just one statistic that I want to put on the table here.

We've touched on it today.

There's such pride in the country about the job that our military forces did in Desert Storm.

We basically got a chance to see some of that on television, not all of it, by any means.

But here you have a disproportionate share of our Armed Forces, now, and our volunteer army, are people from minority backgrounds.

Black service men and women, I think, about 17 percent of the total, that were taking part in that war effort which was carried out in such an extraordinary fashion.

And there's such a sense of feeling in the country of a job well done in terms of the execution of the assignments everybody was given.

So here you have a situation where you have a larger-than-normal representation.

Here's our military force carrying out this operation where black persons in the Armed Forces are doing a substantially larger share, percentagewise, than any other group in this society.

So that would seem to say, on the one hand, that in these difficult life threatening assignments, using all of the sophisticated equipment of the most extraordinary nature, that the ability to perform is so exceptional, that we're calling upon the black community in the United States to carry the largest percentage load of that responsibility, both the tasks, as well as accepting the dangers to life and limb in the process.

And then, you have, over on the other side of the equation, the statistics that you were just citing where so many of our young people, black and white alike, are ending up in prisons, ending up in circumstances that become even more hopeless and more dead end-type situations, where lives, in effect, are just lost.

People get off on a road that leads nowhere.

There's almost no way back.

I mean, how do we reconcile those sorts of things in today's society where, on the one hand, the thing that everybody in the country's paying attention to and is drawing a sense of pride from, in terms of the nature of the performance, and we've seen an extraordinary carrying of that responsibility by young black men and women, and yet, we've got this, over on the other side.

How do we make sense out of that, and how do we make sense out of it in a constructive way, in a positive way, so that the stereotyping that is done, which is so harmful and is so unfair, and goes back for hundreds of years, is something that we can force our way through, at least to people who are willing to think and are willing to care, and are willing to look at facts as they are?

And, yes, Dr. McKinney?

Dr. McKinney. I think that, at the risk of being simplistic, I think that history will bear out that, at any time, an opportunity structure has presented itself to the black community, the black community has taken advantage of it.

And at the risk of being too simplistic, I really think that's one of the answers, and that is that the military provided an opportunity structure.

And I think that we look at other aspects of our society where that structure has been presented, and it's really unfortunate.

I can only think of two.

One has been professional athletics and the other has been the military.

I'm sorry if there are any others that I didn't answer, but I wish there were.

The **Chairman**. The arts, I would say.

Dr. **McKinney**. Fine.

But what I also think is that, on a lot of levels, that we have a tendency to give the oil to the squeaking door.

And one of the areas, don't forget, that ought to be surfaced in our deliberations, is that we don't forget about the whole area of infancy, and what happens to the infant in the home, in terms of developing trust, in terms of developing the capacity to take risks, in terms of dealing with separation anxiety, and in terms of dealing with what we have to have in terms of nurturing and love.

I think that one of the things that has occurred to me, over and over again, is that I don't think that we have conceptualized that being a parent, particularly in a single parent home, is really hard work.

And it seems as though we know that mother and child and that bond and that attachment is so important that we somehow have policies that go out of their way to separate mothers and infants.

What I'm suggesting is that when we look at what happens to infants, as they grow through the developmental cycle, that, if, in fact, we don't have a foundation of security, if, in fact, we don't have a foundation of consistency, if, in fact, we don't have a foundation where the children are free of fear, then I think that what we have is children moving into a very reactionary pattern.

I think Dr. Spencer's points were very important in that we have a body of knowledge that we don't really know how good it is.

But it's very important that some of those very important psychological underpinnings are being formed at a very early age, and that we should follow that through the cycle.

The only suggestion that I would have, and I know that one of our directions is that we come up with solutions that wouldn't cost too much money, I think that one of the things we really need to do is to look at those programs.

The **Chairman**. If I may just interrupt.

Solutions, even if they cost money, will save some money.

They'll save some lives, but they'll probably save a lot more money than they'll ever cost.

I think I know you feel the same way.

But when we invest in people, and we get good outcomes, we always get a lot more back than we ever put in.

This is good economics to invest in people.

Dr. **McKinney**. But I think two things for two particular programs.

I know I think it's very important that we look and see how those programs are run, and whether or not the people who run those programs for young people, particularly in the black community, because I think that's been a recurring theme here, which is that black men are born to black women in black neighborhoods in black communities, and that any problem that we try to solve has got to be systemic.

I really agree with Mr. Williams, that we really can't isolate it and say, let's target this particular group.

But the point that I'm trying to make is that I think we need to relook at headstart, and all the appropriations that are going into that, relative to delivery of services and also add compensatory education and also add education, particularly as it affects our secondary school students.

Senator **Sanford**. We're going to have to bring this to an end pretty soon, but I want to recognize Glegg Watson, from Xerox, who was very instrumental in helping with this concept, and I also want to acknowledge Xerox's contribution to the Commission as well as their contribution to higher education.

Glegg, do you want to add anything?

## GLEGG WATSON, XEROX CORP., STAMFORD, CT

Mr. **Watson**. Thank you, Senator.

I, too, want to lend my voice to the chairman and his committee for convening this forum to address this critical issue facing our society.

It is for this reason that we in Xerox jumped at the opportunity, initially, to cosponsor this conference.

It seems to me being here is almost like being in an NBA all-star game, since you used that as an example of what are the opportunities.

There's only one ball and there are so many stars.

And I'm trying to learn, also, while I'm sitting here.

Because we in Xerox look at trying to find solutions.

We know that because of what the Japanese did to us.

So that's very much in our daily lives.

All of what has been said notwithstanding, it seems to me that we can consider solutions to the questions that have been raised without an understanding of the social, political and economic impacts visited upon us by a society that is still based on race.

However, there are programs that work.

And it is, for this reason, why the corporate community supports programs like Headstart, and scholarships, in spite of what has been said by people inside the Government.

And a tremendous concentration on the K through 12 piece, historically, corporations have not supported their focus on higher education.

If I were a wine maker, I would say we have focused more on the pouring out of the wine out of the bottle than on the grapes on the vine.

And they've withered away in this period, quite candidly.

Because, if you look at mostly over 78 percent of the programmatic support that comes to corporations to education in general focuses on higher education.

So we have been remiss, quite candidly.

There's a tremendous concentration now on the K through 12 and the mentor programs, as in the one for one program, pairing at risk youths with mentors.

I might say that the business community needs to get our act together to provide more jobs for this particular population.

As you spoke about what the military has meant, and you're quite right, military and sports, clearly, and I know because I'm over 6'5" and I'm a black male.

And every time I get in an airport, everybody thinks I'm some great basketball star.

I wish I were and had all the money they had, and a few other things.

But that's the kind of legacy you live if you're black and male and over 6 feet.

So I understand all of that.

But it seems to me there's an excellent opportunity, particularly in a high tech area, particularly in a corporation like ours, which is making equipment that is just mind boggling, in terms of its ability to restructure society and therefore it's impact, possibly negatively, on this particular population, in that they will not be able to use it, and utilize information, because they can't access the data.

I know that we have a part in Palo Alto research out in Palo Alto that does that.

Bell Labs, AT&T, they do that research.

But it seems to me that the strategies that need to be considered need to be focused around a few questions.

How do we prepare our youth for existing and future jobs with career opportunities in the labor market.

How can we initiate a process by which educators, employers, and other community members, together, design a systemwide strategy that meets the work needs of young people and employers.

Third, what resources do we have to begin creating an effective school-to-work transition system, which we do not have, currently, in our country.

So it seems to me, speaking on behalf of the corporate community, that we are terribly concerned about this issue.

We have been, for ourselves, been involved with urban youth programs in major metropolitan cities for years.

We, too, are very hopeful that this forum would provide some solutions that we can be a player, as a stake holder in this society.

Again, thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Governor, you've been hearing all these comments around the table, and those from some of us here.

I'm just wondering, as you reflect on some of the issues that have arisen here, if there are any other thoughts that come to your mind, that you either want to underscore or urge us to pursue specifically.

I just want to make sure if there's any thoughts that you have along that line, that we have a chance to hear.

Governor WILDER. Well, most of the speakers have spoken to the things that I'm really concerned with.

We're doing it in Virginia on what we call a Work Force 2000, to have the business community combine efforts with our educational officials, to be certain that we are not just involved with the youngsters at a time when they can go out into the work force, but rather for the entire continuum of education.

Headstart programs, as has been indicated, at risk youngsters that we've identified, and I think we have two problems here.

And I think we all have identified them.

We've got a question of solutions, but the question is prevention or cure. And I think that the more we can prevent some from falling into what we've heretofore described as that permanent underclass, because it will be a self-fulfilling prophecy, if we continue to do it, and to recognize.

And you, Mr. Chairman, you made it a point.

I don't know how aware you were of its message.

The disparagement of the black family, from inception, to come over in ships and to not be able to name your children by their names, not even be able to live with your family.

But notwithstanding all of that, black families came together and spent the better parts of their existence trying to relocate and to come.

So the thing that has emerged as being new, is the lack of respect for families.

One of the things that disproportionately affects blacks is the changing scene on the national level.

Some several years ago, you saw this movie, "Wall Street," wherein Gordon Gecko, played by Michael Douglas, uttered three words which were particularly disturbing to me, then, and even now.

He said, greed is good.

And you'd be surprised at the number of youngsters that saw that, and who believe that.

So we live in a materialistic world now.

People want to know how they can get ahead, and what does getting ahead mean, anything.

Greed is bad.

You and I know it.

And sitting here, today, I couldn't help but see how those of us who are a part of the solution, hopefully, are a part of the subject of discussion, the numbers of black males in this room who are saying, what has happened to us.

And, obviously, it's a very serious problem.

We have seen some fall through the cracks, and hopefully, we will do everything we can to avoid any further decline.

On the other hand, those unborn and those yet unformed in their thinking, deserve every opportunity we can extend to them now to be certain that they don't fall anywhere near those persons who caught up with them, knowing how to resolve conflicts without shooting and cutting and murdering.

That they're not caught up in the concept of greed.

Whether that family is run by one person or two persons, that respect for family must continue, the respect for mother, the respect for father, the respect for authority, the respect for discipline.

That has to be inculcated at the youngest practicable time.

That's why I endorse all of the suggestions relative to getting some new methodology.

Relative to early headstart programs.

And to the extent that that is something that could be done by this Commission and this committee, and to recognize the vitality and the need for reinvigorating that start with youngsters, I think it not only helps, but it's a direction.

And, as I have indicated, it's one of the programs that I am convinced has worked, and will continue to work.

I couldn't help but further be impressed by the obvious great talent that would be a part of this Commission, as we seek to solve some of the problems.

And as it will be ongoing, we will be outreaching, and I'm very thankful, again, for the wisdom and foresight of the convening of both the hearing here this morning, as well as the conference as it relates to resolving problems.

The **Chairman**. Let me call on Senator Sanford, who has just given extraordinary leadership over many long decades.

It's easy to forget the road we've been over.

He's been out in the front ranks, and no one more so, in terms of Members of this Congress that is presently sitting, than Senator Sanford.

Let me just call on Senator Sanford for his comments.

Senator **Sanford**. You're mighty kind.

And I thank you for all of your leadership.

I think the point stated in the beginning that this is the first step, indicates that there's much to do.

Unlike most congressional hearings, we don't have a piece of legislation that we are considering.

I don't know that much legislation necessarily will solve this problem although some is surely needed.

Somehow we have to find a solution that reaches down to neighborhoods, to the housing projects, to families, or people that could be families.

It's certainly going to test our capacity to be creative.

I'm pleased that this issue, which has been a longstanding interest for many of you here today, has finally been brought to the front of the urban agenda.

I'm also pleased to see our colleague, the Chairman of the Budget Committee, Jim Sasser present today.

It's very important to have the Budget Committee involved with this. [Laughter.]

It is good to have his leadership in this endeavor. This is one of the great many things that he's been concerned about in his State, and across this Nation and I know this concern is shared by the rest of you who are here.

So, I think we've put this situation in a kind of focus.

And I think we have a great deal to look forward to.

I am certainly encouraged at the enthusiasm everybody we've talked to was for doing something about this.

Mr. Chairman, it might be appropriate to ask anyone else if they have some comment to make, because we are running a little bit longer than we told you we would run.

But I wouldn't want to leave here without giving everyone an opportunity to say something, bearing in mind that these records are open for filing additional comments and additional evidence, and additional statements.

The **Chairman**. Let me invite that.

Michael Cross, I might say, from the Detroit Urban League, was not able to get out of Detroit today, so he regrets his not having been here.

Dr. Jones?

Dr. Jones. I would just make kind of a final statement with regard to something that I think Governor Wilder commented on during the course of his more formal presentation.

That was the study that was done with regard to the health status of black males in Harlem, the McCord-Freeman study, that pointed out that the kinds of illnesses that affect black males and are killing them prematurely are really related very much to psychological stress.

I think that I would want to reemphasize how important, in whatever we're going to do with regard to changing the overall society, and its effect, that we at the same time, focus on how we can concentrate on helping black males cope differently with stress.

Because both are going to be necessary, given the kind of timeframe that it's going to require for us to make a difference.

The Chairman. As I indicated when we started out, I've been in a lot of hearings in 25 years in the Senate and the House.

I've never been in one that I thought was more important than the one we've had today.

I thank you all.

Excuse me.

Dr. Height. Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to go back to the point you made about the distinguished service of blacks and other minorities in the Persian Gulf.

It reminded me that part of our history has been characterized, for many years, to kind of rising expectation and rising frustration because, for many of those with whom my organization has worked, many went into the service because it offered them opportunity they could not get in their communities.

And now that their expectations, they're very high.

And I think, therefore, it makes the work that this Commission does much more important than ever.

Because I think, unless some of them have more of a sense that they've been able to have of what the President meant when he spoke of it.

He said that they would hope to receive some of the same freedom here at home that they fought for abroad.

I think we will simply exacerbate the problems that we have.

That's why I think the work of this Commission has a great bearing for the immediate needs that we all see, as so many are coming home with great expectations.

The Chairman. I think you're exactly right.

And it's very important that you make that point.

I think all of us join you in that point.

I guess I want to say a couple of other things, too, with respect to the importance of this new effort that we commence together today.

And that is, that we have to find some new answers and some new methods and some new level of effort for different parts of this problem.

I think those of us who are policymakers here, have to be greatly guided by the insight and wisdom and the knowledge that you bring to us.

In a sense, we have to engage the whole country in dealing with this problem.

And one of the things that I would hope, and want to express now, in this setting, is that I would hope that all white Americans and other Americans in our society would take to heart this issue and what is happening in our black community, what is happening with young black males.

And care about that problem.

You know, this country is really only going to have a great future if we love each other and care about each other.

It's just that simple.

And so, any part of our Nation that's in trouble means our whole Nation is in trouble.

You know, we've got to help each other, and we've got to rally around.

And we can't afford to lose a single life.

We can't walk away from a single person in this country who's got basic distressing and terrible needs and problems with their health problems or other kinds of problems, and expect that America is not going to be the lesser for it.

So we have an obligation, I think, particularly after this effort in Desert Storm, to really put into play the ideals that we talked about in terms of going out and waging that war effort, right here at home.

Because we've got a war at home going on on a number of fronts in a number of ways.

It's killing our people and causing our lives, in many cases, black and white alike, to be squandered.

And that's just not right?

We don't have to accept that.

We don't have to have a country like that.

We've been around long enough, I think, as a nation, in terms of the experience we've had, though we're still a young country, to reach out and take hold of each other, and recognize that we all have to go ahead together in one line of march, in two lines of march, some in and some out.

We've got to figure out a way that everybody has a chance to go forward together, and that's really what we're here talking about today.

If we open our hearts, the minds will follow.

And if our hearts and minds are open, we will find the means to make some difference.

But we don't have a lot of time to waste, because lives are being wasted.

I think of this young man that was gunned down yesterday in Detroit having just worn the uniform of his country in the name of all of us, you know.

That is a loss that is America's loss.

We can do something about it.

And out of our efforts here, things will come that will make a difference, make a real difference.

And that's what has to happen!

Senator Sanford.

Senator **Sanford**. Hit the gavel.

The **Chairman**. Thank you all.

The committee stands in recess.

[Whereupon, at 12:25 p.m., the hearing was concluded, and the committee adjourned, subject to the call of the Chair.]

[Additional material supplied for the record follows:]

THE SENTENCING PROJECT

# TESTIMONY OF MARC MAUER

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR,

THE SENTENCING PROJECT

Before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS

on
The Problems of African American Males in Urban America

March 19, 1991

Washington, D.C.

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Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to speak before the Committee today on these important issues. Most Americans are well aware that the African American male community faces a series of crises which should be of concern to our whole nation. I am very pleased that your Committee is addressing the scope of the problem and seeking constructive solutions.

## The Criminal Justice System and African-American Males

In the past year, my organization has released two criminal justice reports which have received extensive attention and shocked much of the nation. These reports, "Young Black Men and the Criminal Justice System: A Growing National Problem," and "Americans Behind Bars: A Comparison of International Rates of Incarceration," have examined the disturbing trends in our criminal justice policies, particularly as they affect young black men. The highlights of those reports are as follows:

- Almost one in four African-American men in the age group 20-29 is under the control of the criminal justice system -- either in prison or jail, on probation or parole.
- Black males in the United States are incarcerated at a rate four times that of Black males in South Africa.
- The United States now has the highest recorded incarceration rate of any nation in the world, having surpassed South Africa and the Soviet Union in the past decade.
- There are more young African-American men under the control of the criminal justice system than there are

African-American men of all ages enrolled in higher education.

- We now spend $16 billion a year to incarcerate the more than one million Americans in our prisons and jails, and almost $7 billion for the estimated 454,724 black male inmates.

These are very disturbing figures, not only for young black men, but for the black community as a whole, and for our entire nation. In many respects, we can only begin to surmise what the impact of this situation will be for black family and community stability, and for the next generation of black children.

The causes of this crisis are obviously complex. Our reports have attempted to analyze the factors involved, which include: "get tough" sentencing policies; the criminal justice system's historical focus on crimes of the poor; declining social and economic supports; lack of opportunity and sense of hopelessness for many young people; racial disparities in the criminal justice system; and, the impact of the "war on drugs."

All of these factors relate to why some young black men commit crimes, and the response of the criminal justice system to those offenses. While we need to address the long-term issues which affect the African-American community, I will focus my remarks here on more immediate issues pertaining to criminal justice policies. I do this for two reasons:

- First, while crime rates are high in the United States, the doubling of the incarcerated population during the

1980s cannot be explained primarily by increases in the crime rate. Both the FBI Uniform Crime Rate reports and the victimization surveys of the Justice Department show relatively modest fluctuations in crime during this period. Our national response to crime, though, and our criminal justice policies, can in large part explain this dramatic increase in incarceration.

* Second, incarceration is by far the most expensive policy choice we have in the corrections system. If we can develop and implement alternative policies, not only will we reduce the dramatically high rate of incarceration for black men, but we can also do this in a manner which is cost-effective for crime control.

## Recommendations for Policy Changes

Following are recommendations for changes in criminal justice policy which could reduce the impact of the system on young black men:

### 1. Increase Diversion from the Criminal Justice System

Many young and first-time offenders are only stigmatized by their contact with the criminal justice system, without necessarily receiving either appropriate supervision or support. Opportunities exist to divert many of these offenders to organizations and individuals who can better focus on the problems of Black and poor youth. Organizations such as "100

Black Men," in Memphis are attempting to divert young Black men from the criminal justice system by establishing mentor programs, developing mechanisms for keeping Black youth in school, and working with young offenders in the juvenile justice system.

2. Focus the "War on Drugs" on Prevention and Treatment, Rather Than Law Enforcement

During the past decade, we have more than doubled the number of arrests for drug offenses. There are now over one million drug arrests annually. With 70 percent of federal anti-drug funding being devoted to law enforcement and only 30 percent to prevention and treatment, we have created a situation in which many substance abusers have to wait six months or more for treatment, while our courts and prisons fill up with increasing numbers of offenders.

In addition to shifting funding priorities in the "war on drugs," there are effective models of ways to change the orientation of the criminal justice system. The New Haven, Connecticut, police department has implemented policies designed to reduce mass drug arrests and instead encourage treatment for substance abuse problems. The policy is based on previous experience which showed that "sting" operations and mass arrests had generally resulted in a large number of arrests of casual users, at significant expense to the criminal justice system. The department's community-based outreach program now involves officers in a "door knocking" campaign in neighborhoods of high drug use. The officers inform residents of the availability of treatment slots in the city, and encourage anyone with a substance abuse problem to avail themselves of these services.

## 3. Sentence to Ameliorate Racial Disparities

All parties involved in the sentencing process should take advantage of the sentencing process to attempt to reduce the impact of the system on young black men. This process should include a full examination of the circumstances of both victim and offender, and an analysis of community support and supervision mechanisms which may be able to contribute to appropriate sentencing options. As much as possible, this process should be used to restore victims, to assure public safety, and to devise appropriate and constructive sanctions in the community.

## 4. Restore Appropriate Judicial Discretion

Many white collar offenders have traditionally received full consideration of appropriate options at sentencing. Mandatory and guideline sentencing severely restrict the sentencing options for many indigent defendants, while contributing to the dramatic growth in prison populations. Abuse of judicial discretion needs to be carefully monitored, but use of judicial discretion to respond to individual and community needs at sentencing should be encouraged.

5. Increase the Use of Alternatives to Incarceration

A variety of community-based sanctions have been demonstrated to be appropriate punishments for a wide range of offenders. These include restitution to victims, community service work, intensive probation supervision, and provisions for treatment programs, education, and employment. Given additional resources and attention, these programs could serve a broader range of offenders.

6. Monitor Alternative Programs to Assure Racial Proportionality

Programs which establish alternative sentencing options have been established in many jurisdictions. Research shows, though, that there are tendencies to sentence white offenders to alternatives programs more often than minorities. Court officials should establish mechanisms by which they can monitor whether minority offenders are appropriately represented in non-incarcerative sanctions, and if not, to conduct an analysis of the reasons for the disparity.

7. Reduce Lengthy and Inefficient Prison Terms

Mandatory sentencing laws and lengthier prison terms have resulted in high costs, with only relatively modest gains in crime control. Prisoners are prevented from committing crimes in the community while they are locked up, but this represents only a small fraction of all crimes. A 1978 report by the National

Academy of Sciences concluded that to achieve a 10 percent reduction in crime, New York would have had to increase its prison population by 263 percent and Massachusetts by 310 percent.[1]

The massive increase in incarceration and lengthening of prison terms provides almost no long-term benefits in reduction of recidivism. The most recent Justice Department study of this issue shows that recidivism rates, while very high, are virtually identical for prisoners who serve anywhere from one to five years.[2] Therefore, "getting tough" results in high corrections costs, but leaves us with offenders who are no less likely to commit future crimes.

Reducing lengthy prison terms by itself is not the answer to crime. What it would accomplish though, is to relieve the burden on an overcrowded system, to reduce the impact of the system on minorities, and to free up tax dollars to be used for prevention, a more effective means of crime control.

## Conclusion

The two reports we have issued in the past year have received nationwide media attention and strong endorsement for our recommendations in the area of criminal justice policy. I believe that there is much potential for public support of effective criminal justice policies which reduce the disproportionate impact of the system on young black men. Congress has the opportunity to make funding and policy decisions which can help to lead us away from the dubious distinction of being the world leader in incarceration. I hope that we can reverse the trends of the 1980s and choose more effective criminal justice policies for the coming decade.

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[1] National Research Council, Deterrence and Incapacitation: Estimating the Effects of Criminal Sanctions on Crime Rates, National Academy of Sciences, Washington, 1978.

[2] Bureau of Justice Statistics, "Recidivism of Prisoners Released in 1983," Washington, D.C., April 1989.

Testimony by Marvin H. McKinney
Program Officer, Charles Stewart Mott Foundation
on Problems Facing Young Black Men
Before The
Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs

I am Marvin H. McKinney, Program Officer for the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation. The Mott Foundation is a private foundation established in 1926 in Flint, Michigan, by Charles Stewart Mott, a General Motors pioneer with a strong philanthropic commitment. Over time, the Foundation has directed sizable resources to human service areas as they relate to children and families who are at a disadvantage due to skill attainment economic disenfranchisement, community dysfunction and public school undereducation.

Our program interests are primarily national in scope. Our 1991 grant program budget is about $40 million. "During the past ten years, according to Jon R. Blyth, Senior Program Officer, the Foundation has become increasingly concerned over a large number of our nations youth, disproportionately poor and minority who, encounter setbacks in their lives and face the risk of chronic unemployment and dependency." We can cite many successful programs that the Foundation has sponsored in total or jointly with other entities but, like so many efforts expended by others, we cannot cite systemic change. The City of Flint, in which I live and which the Foundation is located, is an example of an urban center whose statistics are reflected in the reasons this panel was summoned. Flint, Michigan, is located in Genesee County which has a population of 440,000.

## Experiences from Mott Children's Health Center

Please allow me to share with you some statistics that are indicative of my community. The data cited is from a Mott Children's Health Center-sponsored study conducted by Dr. Kurt Gorwitz and myself.

One out of 15 of Michigan's 1.3 million black residents live in Genesee County and constitute 20 percent of its 440,000 population. Only Wayne County has a greater number or proportion of black residents. As in much of the rest of the state, Genesee County's black population is in an ongoing transition, with a widening separation into two primary groups based on socioeconomic status.

1. Three out of ten black residents live in households with an annual income under $10,000. Poverty is most prevalent in the 0-4 year age group, particularly if only a single parent is present. Those with middle or higher income are mainly 25-54 years old.

2. Black deaths and the black mortality rate increased between 1980 and 1986. The black annual age-adjusted mortality rate, 9.2 per 1,000, is 15 percent higher than the comparable 8.0 white figure. This equals 105 excess black deaths each year, including 35 infants under one year.

3. Black male deaths from violent causes (homicide, suicide and accidents) increased from 50 in 1980 to 63 in 1987. The majority (37) were murder victims. Among black females, the number remained unchanged at 19. Violence is responsible for 20.5 percent of black

male deaths compared with 7.5 percent for black females, 11 percent for white males and 4.3 percent for white females.

4. Two out of three homicide victims were black males and all but 12 of the 64 killed occurred in Flint. There were 52 homicides in Flint in 1987, and in 19, both the victim and the known assailant were black males. The assailant has not been determined in 16 cases. There also were seven black female victims, with six killed by a black male. Six of the 41 black victims were teenagers and five were murdered by another black teenager. Only 11 of the 52 victims were white.

5. A black male is twice as likely to die before age 45 as a white male. The probability of death before the 45th birthday is 2.3 times as great for black females as for white females.

6. A black male newborn has a 59 percent probability of reaching age 65 compared with 72 percent for black females, 72.3 percent for white males, and 84.2 percent for white females.

7. Black males, on the average, can expect to live 63.8 years, 8.9 years less than black females and 8.1 years less than white males. The gap has widened since 1980 here and throughout the United States because of a .9 year decrease in black male life expectancy concurrent with a continuing increase in the other race-sex groups.

8. Black females can expect to live an average of 72.7 years, 5.5 years less than white females. The gap has widened .6 years since 1980.

9. Three out of five black male students graduate high school. However, black male school dropouts are increasing 10 percent per year while the number and proportion of black female, white male and white female students who do not complete school is falling. The black male nongraduation rate now is one-third greater than for black females. An increasing majority of black college students are female.

## Human Service Delivery System

These statistics only tell a quantitative outcome part of the story, they do not speak to the antecedent underpinnings of people who live in poverty and their relationship to the human service delivery system care. We do not expect the dastardly statistics to be changed any time soon; some of the antecedents to the problems are so deep seeded that an evaluation design that does not target across generational change may be unwise. The problems are not intractable, but they are multicausal and multifaceted and must be attacked through those institutions that have authenticity and credibility in the black community.

Most black low-income people in our city are isolated and invisible to the power people who make decisions about how they shall live and what services they will receive. Even the most sensitive of this power group has no direct contact with the most vulnerable among us. It is business as usual or policy from a distance.

The point that I want to emphasize is that African-American males do not exist in isolation. They are from families who live in neighborhoods, and those neighborhoods constitute a part of a community. To the extent that we posit solutions in a categorical fashion is the extent to which we perpetuate the fragmented, competitive and uncollaborative human service system current in existence.

## Counselor's and Student's React

In preparation for this testimony, I met with two groups of people to assist me in this endeavor. The first group was six high school guidance counselors from inner-city schools and the second group was four African-American male high school students.

The counselors spoke of values. They stated that many of the young people lack self-pride and parental guidance. They mentioned that a number of young men whom they encounter have no history of positive accomplishment and they lack young men skills. Each counselor spoke of the need for the African-American community to embrace its young people by providing a choice of rites of passage, arts, recreational, mentorship and supplemental educational programs. Additionally, these programs should start at an early age when these young people are formulating their ideas about people and the world.

The students, on the other hand, spoke of fear. Fear that they would meet violence almost anywhere. One young man said "my fear is that one day I'm going to step on someone's tennis shoes and get wiped out."

The students when asked to name the most influential person in their lives, they name a relative, a grandmother, a father, a mother and a grandfather. They spoke of nurture and wisdom. They ended the session by saying that all young African-American males are not "trouble" but rather confined, bored and "directional-less," and that any programs that come along should be for all young men even those whose parents have a job.

## The Interaction of Schooling and Community

On July 25, 1989, the Select Committee held Congressional Hearings on America's Young Black Men: Isolated and in Trouble. Dr. Antoine M. Garibaldi of Xavier University of Louisiana referring to a study he conducted in New Orleans made two compelling points that are cogent to our discussion here today. Referring to his study, he maintained that teachers must be conditioned to raise their expectations. He stated "In order for black male students to achieve in school, they must be challenged and taught to believe that they can succeed, regardless of where they live and even if they have not had a preschool education. These expectations must be nurtured and reinforced by parents, by teachers, by the black community and by the larger society as well. Even more, peers must be taught how to help and support their fellow students rather than ridiculing them when they experience occasional failure."

He goes on to say that the problems are not simply an issue of race by stating "One of the most disturbing findings from our study in New Orleans, for example, came from teachers' responses to an item on a questionnaire we designed for them. When we asked teachers if they believed that their black male students would go to college, almost six out of every ten indicated that they did not believe that this would occur. What made this response more troubling was the fact that 60 percent of our random sample of 318 teachers taught in elementary schools, 70 percent had 10 or more years of experience, and 65 percent were black! Obviously, teachers' racial, ethnic or cultural affiliations do not make them immune from holding negative self-fulfilling prophecies about the children whom they teach."

It is all too convenient and too easy to isolate African-American males as the entity who is "at risk"; however, referring to an earlier point, black males are generally members of families whose basic socioeconomic needs are not met because they are part of communities with either limited resources or limited political will to offer opportunity and support.

## Single Parent Families

Much has been written regarding the negative consequences of single parent, low-income, predominantly female head of households; however, Reginald Clark's study strongly suggest that "it is the overall quality of the family's lifestyle, not the composition, or status, or some subset of family process dynamics, that determines whether children are prepared for academically competent performance in the classroom."

Clark's research rejects the notion of automatically assuming a societal pathology when addressing single female headed households. His basic contention is that the "family's main contribution to a child's success in school is made through parents dispositions and interpersonal relationships in the household which gives the child 'survival knowledge' for competent classroom interaction."

This research goes on to list 19 success-producing patterns. Among them are:

1. frequent school contact initiated by parent;
2. child has had some stimulating supportive school teachers;
3. parents expect to play major role in child's schooling;
4. parents expect child to play major role in child's own schooling; and
5. parents provide liberal nurturance and support.

As we move in the direction of restructuring schools through site-base management, it is important that the roles of the principle people involved (teachers, parents, principals and children) be clear about issues of accountability, expectation and interactions.

## Before Formal Schooling

A strong argument can be made that the first 18 months are most important to the infant and the primary care-giver in terms of establishing trust, boundaries of risk taking, affect expressions, accident prevention, love nurturance and attachment. It is during this period that infants must deal with stranger anxiety and the fear of losing a parent. Additionally, this period lays the groundwork for verbal expression and for demonstrating a sense of independence in dressing, feeding and locomotive skills. The crucial point here is that for normal development to take place, the primary parent must be available, psychologically, emotionally and physically. During this period of life consistency, understanding and a continuum of love and tolerance must be ever present.

It is most unfortunate that our current welfare policy thinking does not consider parenting as work, a tremendously demanding occupation. It appears that we are determined to separate low-income mothers from their children at the earliest possible time. In the discipline of Infant Mental Health, it is acknowledged that in order to deal with the cries of the infant, we must first listen and understand the cries of the mother.

In conclusion, I would like to offer the following recommendations

1. Being a competent parent is hard work. Parents on general assistance or Aid to Dependent Children, should be supported in their parenting during the crucial developmental periods of the infant instead of being made to feel guilty because they do not have a job that, in many instances, does not exist.

2. Federal, state and local interventionist strategies should conceptualize the issues of the African-American male as a community issue instead of a categorical gender issue by acknowledging the need for interagency collaboration as directed in P.L.99-497 for services to 0-3 handicapped infants.

3. The Department of Education should reexamine the role of parents in Chapter I Compensatory Education to focus on meaningful parent involvement, emphasizing expectations, accountability, home/school partnerships, community support networks and respite care.

4. The Department of Health and Human Services should modify the parent involvement component of Head Start by increasing its emphasis and

focusing on infant mental concepts and parenting support especially for children born to teenagers.

5. The Department of Housing and Urban Development should provide incentives to encourage community organizing and grassroot problem solving.

6. Jobs must be created for African-American males that are meaningful and is supportive of self-dignity and does not encourage or perpetuate "learned helplessness."

7. The federal government, in its support of higher education, should provide incentives for urban universities to devise effective strategies for urban revitalization in conjunction with established community institutions.

Mr. Chairman, I hope these remarks and my written testimony will prove to be of some benefit to your future deliberations. I will conclude simply by reiterating that African-American men are born of families that reside in communities and our strategies for intervention should be community focused with solutions emanating from community stakeholders.

Thank you for this opportunity.

MM/dmm

●●● 72% OF AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES DROP OUT OF SCHOOL BEFORE COMPLETION OF HIGH SCHOOL (NAACP LEGAL DEFENSE AND EDUCATION FUND)

●●● 56% OF THE TEACHERS DO NOT EXPECT BLACK MALES TO GO TO COLLEGE AND DO NOT ENCOURAGE THEM IN SCHOOL (EDUCATING BLACK MALE YOUTH, A STUDY OF BLACK MALES IN THE NEW ORLEANS PUBLIC SCHOOLS)

●●● NATIONALLY, 45% OF BLACK MALES ARE UNEMPLOYED, AND IN SOME CITIES, 70% OF BLACK MALES, 16-24 YEARS OLD, ARE UNEMPLOYED (RESEARCH BY DR. JEWELLE GIBBS, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA-BERKELEY; DR. JAMES JENNINGS, MONROE TROTTER INSTITUTE, BOSTON)

●●● A WORKING MAN IS TWICE AS LIKELY TO MARRY THE MOTHER OF HIS CHILDREN AS A MAN WHO IS UNEMPLOYED (RESEARCH BY DR. WILLIAM JULIUS WILSON, UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO)

●●● 610,000 AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES, 20-29 YEARS OLD, ARE IN PRISON, ON PROBATION, OR ON PAROLE, BUT ONLY 436,000 ARE ENROLLED IN COLLEGE (RESEARCH BY DR. MARC MAUER FOR THE SENTENCING PROJECT, WASHINGTON, D.C.)

●●● THE DEATH RATE FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES IS 1,016 PER 100,000 WHILE FOR WHITE MALES IT IS 695 PER 100,000 (MINORITIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION, REPORT BY THE AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION)

AS A CONSEQUENCE, TWO GENERATIONS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES HAVE BEEN LOST. WILL YET ANOTHER GENERATION BE LOST? YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

## College Participation Rates for 18-to-24-Year-Old High School Graduates by Race/Ethnicity and Sex, 1976 to 1986

Figures in thousands

### Black

| Years | Total Population | H.S. Grad. (a) | Enrolled in College | Total Population | H.S. Grad. (a) | Enrolled in College |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Women |  |  | Men |  |  |
| 1976 | 1,505 | 986 | 331 | 1,813 | 1,302 | 417 |
| 1977 | 1,528 | 970 | 309 | 1,859 | 1,317 | 413 |
| 1978 | 1,554 | 956 | 305 | 1,897 | 1,384 | 390 |
| 1979 | 1,577 | 973 | 304 | 1,934 | 1,383 | 392 |
| 1980 | 1,600 | 1,055 | 278 | 1,955 | 1,425 | 410 |
| 1981 | 1,750 | 1,154 | 325 | 2,049 | 1,526 | 424 |
| 1982 | 1,786 | 1,171 | 331 | 2,086 | 1,572 | 436 |
| 1983 | 1,807 | 1,202 | 331 | 2,058 | 1,539 | 411 |
| 1984 | 1,811 | 1,272 | 367 | 2,052 | 1,613 | 419 |
| 1985 | 1,720 | 1,244 | 345 | 1,956 | 1,565 | 389 |
| 1986 | 1,699 | 1,225 | 340 | 1,966 | 1,576 | 461 |

### White

| Years | Total Population | H.S. Grad. (a) | Enrolled in College | Total Population | H.S. Grad. (a) | Enrolled in College |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Women |  |  | Men |  |  |
| 1976 | 11,279 | 9,186 | 3,250 | 11,840 | 9,860 | 3,026 |
| 1977 | 11,465 | 9,268 | 3,286 | 11,985 | 10,029 | 2,923 |
| 1978 | 11,572 | 9,438 | 3,195 | 12,078 | 10,088 | 2,882 |
| 1979 | 11,721 | 9,457 | 3,104 | 12,174 | 10,157 | 3,015 |
| 1980 | 11,767 | 9,488 | 3,223 | 12,208 | 10,298 | 3,110 |
| 1981 | 12,040 | 9,619 | 3,340 | 12,446 | 10,504 | 3,208 |
| 1982 | 11,874 | 9,611 | 3,308 | 12,332 | 10,338 | 3,285 |
| 1983 | 11,787 | 9,411 | 3,335 | 12,112 | 10,238 | 3,129 |
| 1984 | 11,521 | 9,348 | 3,406 | 11,826 | 10,026 | 3,120 |
| 1985 | 11,108 | 9,077 | 3,254 | 11,524 | 9,840 | 3,247 |
| 1986 | 10,808 | 8,771 | 3,127 | 11,205 | 9,509 | 3,112 |

### Hispanic

| Years | Total Population | H.S. Grad. (a) | Enrolled in College | Total Population | H.S. Grad. (a) | Enrolled in College |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Women |  |  | Men |  |  |
| 1976 | 701 | 378 | 150 | 850 | 483 | 160 |
| 1977 | 754 | 396 | 139 | 855 | 483 | 139 |
| 1978 | 781 | 420 | 126 | 891 | 516 | 128 |
| 1979 | 837 | 454 | 153 | 917 | 516 | 140 |
| 1980 | 971 | 497 | 154 | 992 | 556 | 160 |
| 1981 | 988 | 498 | 164 | 1,064 | 646 | 178 |
| 1982 | 944 | 519 | 141 | 1,056 | 634 | 196 |
| 1983 | 968 | 476 | 152 | 1,057 | 634 | 198 |
| 1984 | 956 | 549 | 154 | 1,061 | 661 | 207 |
| 1985 | 1,132 | 659 | 168 | 1,091 | 734 | 205 |
| 1986 | 1,338 | 772 | 224 | 1,175 | 737 | 220 |

(a) The number of high school graduates was calculated by adding the number in this age group enrolled in college as of October of that year and the number of high school graduates not enrolled in college. These figures include individuals who enrolled in college without receiving a high school diploma or a GED. Several states do not require entering junior college students to have a diploma or GED. Therefore these high school completion figures will be slightly higher than figures that do not include this relatively small population.

Source: Seventh Annual Status Report: Minorities In Higher Education, American Council on Education: Office of Minority Concerns

# 1988 ACE Annual Report Sounds the Alarm: Higher Ed Community Must Act on the Crisis of the Black Male

*by Eileen M. O'Brien*

If Dr. Reginald Wilson had his way, the most recent report from the Office of Minority Concerns at the American Council on Education (ACE) would come equipped with warning lights and a loud siren to draw even more attention to the study's focus: the disappearance of the Black male on today's campuses.

"As we looked at all ethnic minority groups' participation, the least progress or in fact the most retrogression occurred with Black males," ACE senior scholar Wilson said. Though much attention has focused on societal causes such as crime and drug abuse of this shortage, Wilson said ACE wanted to address what the higher education community could do.

The report, *The Seventh Annual Status Report: Minorities in Higher Education*, was written and researched by Wilson and research associate Deborah J. Carter. It examined a ten-year span of participation rates and was released during ACE's annual meeting in San Diego, January 18-21.

As a group, minorities experienced a 7.6 percent increase in college enrollment, the report found; yet this jump "has been fueled mainly by the increased enrollment of Asians and Hispanics." From 1976 to 1986, ACE stated, "the proportion of Black men attending college suffered the largest decline of all racial and gender groups."

As in last year's status report, ACE detailed an increase in high school completion rates for Blacks and Hispanics with a contrasting decrease in college participation rates for these groups. High school completion rates for Black and Hispanic 18- to 24-year-olds rose from 67.5 percent in 1976 to 76.4 percent in 1986 and from 55.5 percent to 59.9 percent, respectively. Yet Blacks "enrolled-in-college" in this same age group fell from 33.4 percent in 1976 to 28.6 percent in 1986, and the corresponding figures for Hispanics were 35.8 percent and 29.4 percent.

However, gender differences were significant, according to the report. Throughout the period, Black females completed high school at a much higher rate, rising from 71.8 to 80.2 percent. Although the rate for males also rose from 62.3 to 72.1 percent, it never reached parity with Black females.

Also, in college enrollments, Black women held relatively steady at 5.1 percent in 1976 and 5.2 percent in 1986, while Black men dropped from 4.3 percent to 3.5 percent during the same period.

"Encouragingly there are reports of substantial increases in Black college enrollment for fall 1988," ACE noted, yet the report, which relies on the Education Department's Higher Education General Information Surveys, could not document this.

Dr. Gary Orfield of the University of Chicago has found similar results with his research on five urban areas, the Metropolitan Opportunity Project (see *Black Issues*, July 1, 1988). Noting the scarcity of Black men enrolling in and completing college degree programs, Orfield said, "When you put it together with the collapse of the Black family, and the changing job structure of society, you have an absolutely devastating situation."

Yet Orfield cautioned the underrepresentation of Hispanic males in higher education is just as serious. "It doesn't seem so bad because they've come so far in the past ten years. But their [Hispanic males'] numbers are decreasing proportionately," he said.

According to the report, unless the higher education community initiates an intense outreach effort, things will not get better. "During the past decade, many relevant social and economic indicators have worsened, which casts doubt on a near-term reversal of the situation," the study said.

The report's section on Black males in higher education was admittedly more "enumerative" than [illegible] however it did examine some factors which have not received much attention, including:

- *Black males have a lower average age than white males and are outnumbered by Black females.* In the U.S., the median age for Black males is 25.2, but for white males it is 29.4. Also, for every 100 Black females there are 90.6 males, compared with 95.2 white males for every 100 white females. "This suggests that the loss of Black males at any point along the social and educational pipeline is more conspicuous and has proportionately greater consequences," the report noted.
- *Black males suffer from debilitating health problems to a greater degree than males in other ethnic and racial groups;* Black men have a higher death rate, a lower life expectancy and a greater incidence of serious diseases. In 1984, the death rate for Black males was 1,016 per 100,000, while for white males it was 695.
- *Black males are disciplined, expelled and suspended at higher rates than any other group, and they are more likely than others to be diagnosed as mentally retarded or emotionally disturbed.* (See related story, page 3.)
- *A disproportionately high number of Black males are raised in female-headed households.* "Such households have relatively few male role models present, and have a greater likelihood of being welfare-dependent than two-parent households," according to the study.
- *Black males have very few role models at all levels of education.* Only 1.2 percent of all elementary school teachers and 3.2 percent of all secondary school teachers are Black men, and Black males accounted for just 4.1 percent of all full-time faculty members in 1985.

University of Chicago's Orfield noted the significant lack of role models. "One of the problems is that young Black men really don't have enough contact with successful Black males who've been to college, they have more contact with those who have been successful in the underground economy," he said.

"In inner-city high schools, aspirations have shrunk and hopes have gone down," Orfield added. His research and the ACE report came to the same conclusion: the country needs more Black men in elementary and secondary teaching positions as well as in faculty positions. "It's real hard to see a path for yourself when you don't see anyone like you succeeding," he said.

The ACE report indicated several areas for further consideration, including:

- better data collection and reporting by the federal government, disaggregated by race and sex;
- more refined studies of Black self-image and motivation;
- research on the impact of Black teachers or the lack thereof, on Black student achievement;
- studies of military personnel, disaggregated by race and sex, to determine the use of GI Bill benefits; and
- targeting recruitment and retention programs specifically at Black males, such as Stockton State College's efforts in New Jersey.

Orfield was optimistic that the attention brought to the ACE report would have an impact on the problem.

He concluded, "I haven't encountered anyone in this country who isn't concerned about this. No one thinks it's a good thing that fewer Black men are going on to college. This is the kind of issue that if the pieces are put together the right way, a lot of progress could be made without activating liberal/conservative divisions."

Copies of the report, *The Seventh Annual Status Report: Minorities in Higher Education* are available for $8.50 each from the Office of Minority Concerns, American Council on Education, One Dupont Circle NW, Suite 800, Washington, DC 20036, (202) 939-9395 ■

them in homogeneous settings with Black male teachers in hopes that the environment would improve their academic performance.

"The guys felt special about having something really good to have all their own," said St. Rocco Principal Anthony Decina. "Afterwards, they came out with a tremendous increase in motivation, self-concept, responsibility and without the usual embarrassment of the girls being brighter than they."

The organizers of the program created an open environment to address issues affecting them, said Decina. He said he found that both boys and girls were affected similarly by peer pressure, but neither felt comfortable discussing the subject in front of one another. The boys seemed to be particularly embarrassed about addressing issues relating to sex, he said. "You almost see the need for ... guys to be together to talk about what is facing them," he said.

Decina said they returned the boys to their original homerooms after a semester and found they had risen above or remained on the same level as their peers. They continued to do so through the seventh and eighth grades, he said.

None of the students who participated in the program had to repeat the year or attend summer school classes, said Decina, adding that a few even made the honor roll.

"There is so much visual evidence of the program," he said. "You now see these students reading in the hallway when all they would've wanted to do before was bounce a basketball day and night."

Although the program at St. Rocco was discontinued due to lack of classroom space, a program for students in the fourth grade is in progress. Also, more cultural history and same-gender talks have been incorporated into the school's curricula.

Many educators agree that such programs are worth trying. "I worked in high schools and most of these boys are physically strong, mentally alert and ready to be molded into the kinds of men we want to represent our group," Saunders said.

The National Education Association (NEA) has issued only lukewarm support for the concept of all-Black male classrooms, saying that they promote cultural and sexual diversity in schools. The association does note, however, that a national program such as the one Kunjufu preaches could prove beneficial in certain situations.

Other educators also have issued measured praise. Dr. Charles Moody, founder of NABSE and vice provost for minority affairs at the University of Michigan, said, "My concern is that people may put energy and effort into this but not in those areas where this kind of program is not going to be available. We need to make sure the quality of education is improved for all Black males. If people don't believe those kids can learn, it's going to be difficult to push these students to achieve."

Offered Elliott C. Lichtman, an attorney who represented the NAACP Legal Defense Fund in the *Adams* desegregation case, "It is a form of racial segregation with a noble objective. You can argue to defend it but also against it."

Lichtman said usually segregation has an "obnoxious" purpose but that this might be an exception. "I don't know of any precedent that would decide this case. It could open the door to a lot of segregation." ■

EWS [illegible] Nation [illegible]

Statement of
JOHN E. JACOB
President and Chief Executive Officer
NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE, INC.
submitted to
21st Century Commission on African-American Males
Tuesday, March 19, 1991

It is with great enthusiasm, and with a deep commitment to the problems impeding the progress of young Black males that I serve as an honorary board member of the 21st Century Commission on African-American males.

Through research, as well as national and community based initiatives, the National Urban League has for years provided leadership on issues pertaining to the development and wellbeing of our young African-American males.

In 1984, our Research Department published a landmark report, Running The Gauntlet: Black Men In America, which provided a comprehensive assessment of the status of Black men. In 1985, the Urban League was at the national forefront in bringing adolescent males into national discussions on teen pregnancy when we launched our "Adolescent Male Responsibility Project".

Since 1988, the Urban League has hosted three national conferences on African-American males. Through these conferences, various African-American experts identified not only problems, but also contemporary models for solutions through programs and their evaluation that could be applied in African-American communities. Through our current "Stop the Violence Clearinghouse" and "African-American Adolescent Male Development Center", the League is promoting and encouraging improved academic achievement, reduced teen pregnancy, family stability, work readiness, and increased self-esteem.

This nation, and the African-American community as a whole must become more empowered in the preservation and advancement of the African-American male. Employment, education and training opportunities must be implemented with particular emphasis on young black males.

The restoration of the African-American male as an investment in the future as well as an acknowledged and productive member of our society is long overdue. We cannot allow this critical segment of our society to succumb to an already devastating pattern of underachievement.

I commend this Commission's effort to place this issue at the forefront of this country's domestic agenda.

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RUNTA
(TRUTH)

The National Urban League Research Department Fact Sheet

Volume 3 Number 2 June 1990

# STONY THE ROAD THEY TROD: THE AFRICAN AMERICAN MALE

☐ **African American males have a shorter life span than any other population group in America.**

☐ **Not only do African American males tread a stony path in terms of physical life, they also encounter a number of barriers to the achievement of a healthy economic life.**

☐ **Although the psychological costs of the devaluation and systemic oppression of African American males have not been fully estimated, they are tremendous.**

## From the Editor...

Both beyond and within the African American community, images of the African American male have transcended the factual and approached the mythological. More than 25 years ago, Martha Reaves and the Vandellas implanted folkloric attitudes when they sang, "He's shiftless and he's lazy, he's 'bout to drive me crazy, honey chile." In 1990, movies and other forms of popular media continue to imprint on the public consciousness harsh and unflattering images of African American males through representations that are little more than caricature.

Such treatments are not benign. Generations of African American males have been socialized into self-images that seek consistency with the paradigmatic portraits of themselves depicted in popular accounts. Additionally, employers, policemen, teachers and other authority figures come to de-individualize African American males and, consequently, allow into their decision-making process fiction as well as fact. What was fiction is sometimes transformed into fact, and the road that African American men must tread becomes even stonier.

Accordingly, this issue of **Runta** examines the contemporary status of African American males. Entitled "Stony the Road They Trod," it presents data showing how African American males continue to tread a stony road as they seek to navigate their lives through the "troubled waters" of American society.

Read and reflect...

**Betty Collier Watson**

There are many signs that African American males are a dangerously devalued group. A compelling example of the devaluation was seen in the last presidential election when an African American male, Willie Horton, was used as a symbol of evil and degradation for blatant political purposes. More recently, the devaluation of African American males was revealed, through the credibility Boston police assigned to Charles Stuart's account of the murder of his pregnant wife. Based solely on Mr. Stuart's statement, scores of African American males were indiscriminately detained and questioned by police as suspects in this incident. Similarly, the racially motivated killing of 16 year-old Yusef Hawkins in Bensonhurst, New York also attests to the devaluation of African American males. The outcome of the devaluation process is that African American males have become an increasingly endangered group. The cumlative empirical evidence in a variety of critical areas is persuasive on this point.

☐ **African American males have a shorter life span than any other population group in America.**

•In 1987, the life expectancy of African American males was 65.4 years. In contrast, the life expectancy of white males was 72.1 years. Between 1985 and 1987, the life expectancy of African American males declined significantly.

•Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and pneumonia/influenza are the only two major categories where death rates for African American males improved since 1970 in comparison to white males.

•African American males die from most major diseases at rates that far exceed their white counterparts. In 1986, for example, 89.4% more African American males than white males died of cerebrovascular disease, 119.6% more died of prostate cancer, 55.4% more died of pneumonia and influenza, 96% more died of diabetes mellitus, and 70.5% more died of chronic liver disease and cirrhosis.

•Homicide is the leading cause of death for African American males age 15-24 years. In 1987, the homicide rate for African American males in this age group was 85.6 per 100,000, seven times higher than the rate for their white counterparts and 43% above the 1990 target rate of 60 per 100,000. On the other hand, African American males in this age group are less likely than whites to commit suicide.

•An African American male has a 1-in-21 chance of being murdered before his 25th birthday. Between 1984 and 1987, the homicide death rate for African American males age 15-24 rose by 39%, returning to about the same level as existed in 1980.

•In part because of their exceptionally high death rate from homicide and other causes, there are only 85 African American males for every 100 females in the 25-44 age group.

Such data are frightening. Societies exist in order to increase the chances of survival and physical well-being of their members. Thus data such as those presented above indicate a failure of the broader American society to socialize, acculturate and integrate African American males and protect their welfare. It is insufficient to view the array of factors which reduce the life chances of African American males as soley the products of individual choice. Behavior choices themselves are contoured by the society in which we live.

☐ **Not only do African American males tread a stony path in terms of physical life, they also encounter a number of barriers to the achievement of a healthy economic life.**

•African Americans made considerable economic strides between 1940 and 1970, but these gains were surpassed in the 1980's by even stronger gains by whites. Thus, the earnings of African American men relative to white men worsened during the decade of the eighties.

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*Runta provides tiumely data and analysis on African Americans. It is issued as a public service. Direct inquiries to:* ***Dr. Betty C. Watson,*** *Editor.*

•Between 1973 and 1986, the proportion of employed African American males age 18-29 years working in manufacturing industries declined by 43%, compared to a 28% for all groups.

•The unemployment rate of African American male teenagers persisted at exceedingly high levels throughout the 1980s, standing at about 37% at the end of the decade. The comparable rate for white male teens was less than 16%.

•The overall unemployment rate for African American males is 12.1%, more than double the white rate of 5.3%.

•Young African American men are also more likely than young whites to be out of the labor force. About 40% of African American teen males are out of the labor force, compared to 29% of white teens; 17.5% of African American males age 20-24 years are out of the labor force, as against 7.8% of their white counterparts.

•Between 1973 and 1986, the number of African American non-Hispanic males age 18-29 years who were employed year-round fell by 20%. By contrast, the number of white and Hispanic males in this age group employed year-round increased.

•In March 1990, the average weekly earnings of African American males with non-working wives was $340, compared to $457 for their white counterparts.

•In 1988, approximately one third of all African American males age 15-24 lived in poverty, compared to one in one hundred white males in this age group.

In Spite of the advent of the women's movement in the sixties, American society has retained norms which measure the value of a male by the degree to which he is a "breadwinner." The data above suggest that the American economic system is failing to absorb African American males into the contemporary labor market. This observation is linked to the fact that both structural changes in the labor market and the continued operation of racially discriminatory hiring practices constrain the economic progress of African American men.

☐ **The ominous plight of African American males has contributed to a large number of female-headed families, a lack of positive adult male role models, intra-racial crime, and other dysfunctional sociopsychological conditions.**

•African American female-headed families were 50% of all African American families with children in 1985, but received only 25% of the total African American income, while 70% of the total income was received by husband-wife families.

•In the course of their childhood, 86% of African American children are likely to spend some time in a single-parent household, more than twice the rate for white children. Contrary to popular belief, a slightly greater percentage of African American than white households consist of a male and his own children.

•Approximately 20% of African American males are not high school graduates, relative to 15.8% of white males, 16.5% of African American females, and 12.8% of white females. Among African Americans, the proportions of males and females who complete high school but go no farther are comparable at around 37%.

•Only 42.8% of African American male high school graduates enrolled in or completed 1 or more years of college in 1988, relative to 49.6% of African American females, 59.2% of white females, and 57.9% of white male high school graduates. Among African Americans, the proportions of males and females completing 4 or more years of college are comparable at just over 11%.

•From 1987 to 1988 alone, the proportion of African American male high school graduates enrolled in or completing one or more years of college dropped by 5.5 percentage points. College enrollment rates for all other demographic groups increased during this period.

Joblessness, the loss of educational ground, the increasing numbers of female-headed households, etc. are intricately related conditions. Indeed, such variables interact to create a self-perpetuating cyle. The loss of educational ground, for example, increases the probability of joblessness. Less obviously, the relatively lower levels of educational attainment of African American males hinders the courtship process and, subsequently, family formation. Thus, such forces combine to generate psychosocial dysfunction.

☐ **Although the psychological costs of the devaluation and systemic oppression of African American males have not been fully estimated, they are tremendous.**

•While representing only 5.9% of the U.S. populatiion, African American males constitute nearly 50% of all prison imates. The lifetime chance of incarceration is six times higher for African American males than it is for white males.

•In 1984, despite representing only 15% of the U.S. population 18 years of age or younger, African American males in this age group accounted for 45% of all juvenile arrests for murder/non-negligent homicide; 54% for manslaughter; 68% for forcible rape; and 39% for robbery and aggravated assault.

•Almost one-in-four African American men in the age group 20-29 is either in prison, in jail, on probation, or on parole on any given day. For white men in this age group, only one-in-sixteen is under the control of the criminal justice system.

•It has been determined that the number of young African American men under the control of the criminal justice system (606,690) is greater than the total number of African American men of all ages enrolled in college (436.000). For white males, the comparable figures are 4,600,000 in higher education and 1,054,508 in the criminal justice system.

•African American juvenile males are more than four times as likely to be arrested and incarcerated for a violent offense than are white juvenile males.

As one reviews the data on African American males and the criminal justice system, one sees the interaction of two problems. On the one hand, the devaluation of African American males becomes internalized and leads to a self-fulfilling prophecy. On the other hand, the data also reflect pronounced differences in the degree to which African American versus white males are detained, arrested, and convicted of criminal offenses.

☐ **In recent years, the survival of African American males has been threatened by the centering of drug markets in African American communities.**

•Much of the violence that has turned many of our cities into "war zones" can be attributed to the sale of crack cocaine. However, many African American males who are "employed" in this "market" do not use drugs. Overall, 80% of all cocaine users in the U.S. are white, while only 14% are African Americans.

•Nevertheless, African American males are disproportionately victims of the drug trade. in 1984, African American males accounted for 12 percent of all 13-24 year old males reporting to hospital emergency rooms for drug abuse. They represented 15 percent of AIDS cases in this age group.

Substance abuse continues to constitute a major threat to African American males as well as to the broader African American community. The location of drug markets within African American communities does create "employment" opportunities, but such opportunities often lead to death and distruction. Additionally, such "markets" deal in "goods" that are hazardous to the health of their consumers. Thus, the drug trade constitutes a dual threat to the lives of African Americans, particularly African American males.

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Despite the ominous statistics, the African American male has been a significant contributor to America's past and will play a major role in the next century. A productive African American male is an investment in the future of the nation, both domestically and internationally. The Hudson Institute, National Alliance of Business, and many other groups point to "workforce 2000" and the need for every able-bodied American to be productive if the U.S. is to remain competitive in the changing world marketplace. Traditional minority groups and those least prepared for work will make up the majority of the country's labor pool. This situation could present a crucial "window of opportunity" to African American males.

However, in order to take advantage of the changing economic and demographic conditions, African American males must be effectively prepared to meet the challenges ahead. Thus African American males will need greatly improved education and skills training to compete and contribute in the economy of tomorrow. Above all, the African American male must be in the forefront of his own survival. His spirit must be renewed with hope and vision.

The African American community as a whole must become more empowered in the preservation and advancement of the African American male. This role entails becoming more proactive in creating and expanding positive opportunities for African American males, with a particular emphasis on the needs of the younger generation. Programs such as male monitoring, rites of passage, transitional services for ex-offenders, and male fellowship clubs could provide vital ancillary benefits in this regard. Otherwise, volunteer service organizations, religious institutions, fraternities and sororities, business and industry groups, educational institutions, and the media, as well as the policymaking community at all levels, must collaborate and do their fair share to tap the potential that the African American male represents.

Indeed, we all have a responsibility for implementing meaningful preservation and enhancement measures that promise to restore the African American male to his full dignity. All such efforts should be instituted with love and compassion for one of the world's true human treasures, the African American male.

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SOURCES: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, *Health in the United States, 1989*, March 1990; Jacquelyne J. Jackson, "But Where Are the Men?," *The Black Scholar*, December, 1971, pp. 30-41; U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings, March 1988;* Andrem Sum and Neal Fogg, "The Changing Economic Fortunes of Young Black Men in the American Economy of the 1980's" Center for labor Market Studies, Northwestern University, July 1989; *Quarterly Economic Report on the African American Worker*, National Urban League Research Department, May 1990; U.S. House of Representatives, Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families, *Fact Sheet*, July 1989; U.S. Department of Education, Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Educational Statistics, 1985-1986;* U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Correctional Population in the United States—1986;* "The College Gap," American Council on Education, Office of Minority Concerns, February 1989; Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Uniform Crime Reports, 1984;* U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, "Money Income and Poverty Status in the united States – 1989"; Larry Bumphas, "Children and Marital Disruption: A Replication and Update," *Demography*, 1984, pp. 49-65; James Austin and David M. Aaron, "The Impact of the War on Drugs," National Council on Crime and Deliquency, 1989; *Drug Abuse Warning Network*, National Institute for Drug Abuse, 1986; U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Marital Status and Living Arrangements of Children Under 18 years. By Race and Hispanic Origin*, 1988.

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## About the Author

Dr. Jeffery M. Johnson is President and principal consultant of Management Plus Consulting and Training Services in Washington, D.C. He is also a visiting lecturer at The Cheney University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Johnson is author of the book, *The Endangered Black Male: The New Bald Eagle*, and has written several other papers on the problems of African American youth and related subjects.

ADDRESS
BY
JOHN E. JACOB
PRESIDENT & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE, INC.
AT
INVITATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
"MANHOOD AND FATHERHOOD"
ATLANTA, GA
MARCH 20, 1988

We meet to discuss strategies and solutions to enable the survival of black youth -- and by extension -- all African-American people.

I'm not exaggerating the importance of the issue of young African-American males.

We meet at a time when a black man is running for president of the United States; a time when blacks have climbed to seats of power in major cities across the nation; a time when black judges preside over federal courtrooms and black executives govern major portions of multi-billion dollar corporations.

It's a time when our nation's leaders assure us this is a color-blind society, and a time when blacks live in suburbs and work in jobs that used to be closed to us.

But it's also a time of mounting black poverty, of a fast-growing mass of young people without the education to hold jobs in a changing economy -- a time of hopelessness and despair among millions of young African-Americans.

It's a time when the statistics show not only continued and growing black disadvantage -- but also the frightening prospect of half our young people in imminent danger.

Let me run down a few of those statistics now, for they serve to illustrate how deep the problem goes and how perilous it is for the future of all African-Americans:

: Half of all our children are growing up poor, and almost half are in female-headed households.

: African-American children are three times more likely than whites to be homeless, to be suspended from school or placed in classes for the retarded, or to be unemployed, and five times more likely to become murder victims.

: Black youth drop out of school at nearly twice the white rate, and black college enrollment is down sharply. If the black improvement in SAT scores continues, it will take until the year 2045 to equal current white SAT scores.

: One out of four of our youths derive income from criminal activity, one in five has substance abuse problems, and homicide is the leading cause of death for African-American young men.

That's a grim recital of some grim facts. There are plenty others I could cite. But the fact is that our youth are at a terrible disadvantage in our society, and our young men are the most vulnerable group in America.

The problem for America should also be obvious. Continued chaos among poor black youth endangers the principles of equality and fairness that are the foundations of this country, even though those ideals have so often been violated.

And the problem for America's economy can't be put too strongly. The demographics show a decline in the numbers of young people entering the work force. By the turn of the century white males will be only 15 percent of new workers.

The American economy needs higher workforce skills levels to be competitive. But at the same time, a greater proportion of its workforce is made up of black youth, half of whom come from poverty backgrounds and don't have the education and the skills to become productive in a high-tech, information based economy.

That's going to be our most powerful argument for justice. America has never been too easily won over by moral appeals. But the appeal to economic self-interest is rarely ignored.

Just as the fate of African-Americans depends on ensuring that our young people enter the mainstream, the fate of the American economy depends on making use of the human resources represented by our youth.

This country is going to become a colony of Japan if it insists on denying black youth opportunities for quality education, skills, and training.

Our problem is how to bridge the gap between the reality facing young black men today and the alternatives for the future.

How do you make people act responsibly, when society offers few incentives for such behavior and has traditionally punished black men who assert their individuality and manhood?

And how do you get young people thinking ahead to plan for a doubtful future where there is little in their experience to convince them to sacrifice the instant gratifications of sexual experience, drug highs, and the thrills of street life?

How do you educate young kids in the projects who listen to the sound of gunfire when they go to sleep and whose survival depends on hooking up with gangs for protection?

The lawlessness in so many of our neighborhoods is something that degrades the spirit at an early age. Our kids have been abandoned to pressures and strains no human being should have to face -- much less children of 5, 8, and 10 years of age.

We've got children killing children -- and children barely out of diapers running around with handguns and even automatic weapons.

We've got little children and kids in their early teens living lives of desperation, running crack, shooting each other, terrorizing their neighborhoods and themselves.

We've got to challenge that. We've got to look to ways we can protect our kids and protect our neighborhoods. We've got to ask where those weapons are coming from and why little children are being seduced into their own destruction.

We've got to ask what kind of society creates conditions in which even little children sell their lives so cheaply ... in which hopelessness is a way of life ... in which despair drives young people to destroy themselves and their communities.

And we've got to consider ways in which we can reclaim our streets from the lawless and the self-destructive.

We have to find ways in which our communities can enforce a value system and a civility that gives people breathing space and allows us to live normal lives.

We have to look at successful communities that have risen up against the tide of violence to create coalitions that increase the safety of our people.

Those coalitions are growing throughout our communities -- and are even composed of unlikely allies at times. I'm thinking of the way the Muslims in Bedford-Stuyvesant and elsewhere are running joint patrols with the uniformed police.

Just a few years ago, the police were targeting the Muslims for harrassment and elimination, and now they're cooperating. Just a few years ago, the police were considered the enemies in some of our communities -- now we see police departments run by black chiefs and our people cooperating to drive the crack-dealers and muggers out of our neighborhoods.

So there are forces coming together now that couldn't or wouldn't come together in the past -- and the reason is that so many of our communities have deteriorated so badly that we have no other choice but to ally in common cause against the forces of destruction.

This Conference brings together an impressive array of experts and leaders whose collective wisdom can answer some of the tough questions, and whose creativity can come up with new approaches that may save our kids.

I'm hoping that, together, we can come up with new ideas and the determination to implement them.

We aren't going to solve the problems of young African-American men overnight. The Urban League has been dealing with those problems throughout its 78 years, and we have about as much experience as anyone in the country with it.

And the one thing we've found for sure is that while the nature and the depth of those problems change over time, they cannot be solved without the efforts of both the black community and sound government policies that impact on our youth.

Let's start with the African-American community, because we can't allow ourselves to get trapped in the mindset that says only government can do anything about our problems.

We are a strong people. We have survived the most brutal oppression and thrived in the most difficult environment.

I'm not about to say that we need Ronald Reagan or anyone else who sits in the White House to be on our side before we can do something about our own survival problems.

And I'm smart enough to know that Ronald Reagan doesn't care about whether we survive or not -- and his successor may not either.

So I see the efforts of the African-American community as being central to restoring manhood and responsibility to our young men. We've got to make them an integral part of a functioning community structure.

The Urban League and many other community-based agencies, churches, social and fraternal organizations and others are hard at work on the problem.

The Urban League was one of the first national agencies to call attention to the situation of the African-American family, and to advocate on its behalf.

While everyone else was talking about the immorality of teenage girls or the lack of values, we were pointing out that the decline in intact black families tracks the decline in labor force participation for black men.

When others were condemning black women for raising their children, we were condemning a society that denied those women access to jobs and child care.

And while others continue to blame the victims and to condemn African-American people, we have gone about the business of mobilizing the black community and acting as catalysts for change.

The Urban League co-sponsored a Black Family Summit with the NAACP that brought black activists and academics together to consider the plight of black families and to consider solutions.

That Summit acted as a catalyst to involve a range of community groups in the issue. And it boldly told the nation that racism and poverty were the major factors in the terrible troubles facing African-American families.

The Urban League is also deeply involved in direct services to young people. Our job training programs provided passports to the middle class for countless young people who acquired skills and training.

Many of the pillars of our community today were high school drop outs or otherwise troubled youth who enrolled in our street academies, or were helped through our scholarship programs.

And thousands of young women have been able to avoid unintended pregnancies or have developed good parenting skills because of our teenage pregnancy programs.

We've taken a lot of flack because of some of the stands we've taken on family planning issues. But we are proud of the work we've done to ensure that young black women get access to health services that give them more choices about when and how often to parent. Currently, we are doing more in this area than ever before.

In education, we've mounted a national Education Initiative designed to ensure measurable improvements in black student performance. The ultimate goal is to have our kids achieving as well or better than any other group in the country.

We believe that education is going to be the key to economic survival, and we're mobilizing the African-American community in our affiliate cities behind specific, targeted efforts that improve black academic performance.

In some places that means dropout prevention programs. In others, programs that teach parents to read and do math so they can help their kids. In still others, it's advocacy to pressure the schools to do a better job. But whatever the tactic adopted by specific Leagues, the overall strategy is to make sure our kids don't end up sweeping around computers operated by white kids.

And consistent with what's beginning to happen in more communities across this country, Garry Mendez has put together a major crime prevention program designed to reclaim our streets and neighborhoods from drug pushers and others who choose to destroy our young and old alike.

Under the theme "crime is not a part of our cultural heritage", Garry has convinced numerous community groups to sponsor programs that will teach our young people pride, self-development and achievement. And at the same time, we're rallying the adult community to support youth development programs that can serve as a alternative to crime and other self-defeating and self-destructive behavior.

This Manhood and Fatherhood Conference, is a direct outgrowth of another major NUL initiative targeted to young males. It seeks to instill a strong sense of equal responsibility in each teenage boy for avoiding parenting before they are ready and willing to be full-fledged, active and contributing fathers.

A lot of what we are seeing today with regard to male youth crime, drug abuse and young boys making babies with no intention of providing for them, is directly linked to the fact that our young boys are growing up without guidance, support and discipline from their own fathers.

Where are they suppose to learn what manhood is really about if not from their own fathers, or at least their uncles or fathers of their friends. Those proud, competent African-American men have to be the role models -- not the pusher or the pimp.

Ed Pitt tells the story of talking with inmates in a state penitentiary about their relationship with their children. He says this was not going over too well until he asked how many of them had good relationships with their own fathers.

Then the atmosphere changed. Few of them had much of a relationship at all with either their own fathers or their own children. That realization led them to volunteer to support the Urban League's Adolescent Male Responsibility Program.

Another group of inmates contacted by Garry Mendez donated the money that purchased the first set of "Don't Make A Baby If You Can't Be A Father" and "God Bless The Child That's Got His Own" campaign posters.

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There is a deeper message here and we need to spend some time exploring it together.

I believe such experiences tell us that we can't write off anyone -- that given the proper motivation even those most hardened by life and most outside the community can be drawn back in to contribute to solving our problems.

In the National Urban League's State of Black America 1988, Bruce Hare points out the need for the entire African-American community to work together -- for all of our community groups, organizations and individuals to support programs that assist our young people.

We can't settle back and blame Ronald Reagan or the system or society, and allow an entire generation of our youth to go down the drain.

We've got to do what we can -- and we can do plenty.

And at the same time, we've got to put the pressure on government. And we've got to do it with arguments that politicians and the business community can understand.

They can understand the impact of dropout rates when we tell them that just one year's class of dropouts costs the economy some $240 billion in lost earnings and taxes, and billions more in the costs of crime and social services over their lifetimes.

They can understand the impact of drugs when widespread addiction means higher crime rates, economic losses, and the threat of AIDS spreading to the general community.

And they can understand us when we tell them that a dollar spent in child health and nutrition programs saves almost $5 in health costs down the road.

They can even understand us when we tell them that denying skills training and work experience today means this economy won't have the workforce it needs to meet future global competition from Japan and Germany and the rest of the world.

But they've had trouble understanding the implications of that -- the need for national full employment programs, for quality schools for our kids, for guaranteed jobs for our young people, for social support services that open doors of opportunity and help people to overcome their deficits to make it.

The Urban League is on record as supporting a National Youth Corps that would allow young people to perform services to society and to get training and work experience while they're doing it.

We've called for guaranteed jobs and training for all youngsters at risk, as the way to draw them into the mainstream and ease the transition from school to work.

We are on record as supporting measures to ensure that poor young people have equal access to college, and should be helped by direct aid and work-study programs instead of loan programs that discourage college attendance.

And we ask why an affluent kid in the suburbs can win scholarship aid to go to an expensive college while a poor kid from the inner city can't get a dime to go to a technical school that teaches a trade or a marketable skill.

I suppose the list of what government has to do can be extended indefinitely -- but the point is that government is doing next to nothing.

This Administration has gone through eight years in office pretending that African-American people don't exist, and the best way we can convince them that we do exist is to use our democratic right to vote in this election year of 1988.

Registration and voting campaigns can be an organizing focus that draw black youth back into the community. Jesse's campaign has galvanized energies and passions that have to be channeled into the political arena after the conventions in the summer.

We're going to have to make African-American political power the lever that moves government to be on our side instead of our backs. It can revive the national commitment to affirmative action, to social welfare programs and to youth programs.

And the effort to mobilize the vote can be a catalyst to bring the community together around its concerns -- and around the effort to ensure the survival of our young African-American men.

So this Conference has a lot on its plate -- to analyze the plight of young black males, and to come up with solutions that can be implemented by the community itself as well as the government.

And as we set about our task, it seems apt to think a bit about the changes that have occurred over time -- the differences between our own youth and those of today's young black men.

I ask your indulgence if I reminisce a bit about my own youth, because I think it may shed some light on those differences and how they alter the problem.

I grew up so poor we couldn't even afford a whole-numbered address -- our house was number 2513-and-a-half Pierce Avenue in Houston.

Two rooms and a kitchen for seven people. No gas. No electricity. We did our homework by the light of a kerosene lamp and bathed in a wash tub in the kitchen.

Growing up black in the South of the 1930s and 1940s taught you a lot. It taught you that you did not have the same rights white people had -- that if you rode a bus it had to be under a sign that said "Colored" -- that going downtown was inconvenient at best and dangerous at worst -- and that poverty had an extra, black dimension to it.

You learned that poverty and racism grind people down -- drain them of energy and creativity -- damage their self-esteem and hopes.

But we survived, and so did so many of today's professionals who grew up poor and segregated.

Looking back at the Houston ghetto of my youth, I see at least four basic factors that made it possible for many people in my generation to get ahead.

One is family. Most of the youngsters in my neighborhood were brought up in close-knit families. They had two parents, and if they didn't, grandparents, aunts, and cousins were everywhere -- close, supportive, nurturing.

Today, half of black children grow up in single-parent families. And while the extended family continues its vital role, too many of those kids simply don't get the parenting and supervision that build self-esteem and self-confidence.

A scond important factor is values.

We may have been poor, but we had what some people today deride as middle-class values. We grew up in the church. We knew what was right and what was wrong, and if we didn't, our parents and our neighbors would let us know pretty quickly.

And we were taught pride and dignity. My father always had two things with him -- his poll tax receipt, and his NAACP membership card.

The external world told him he was inferior because he was black -- but he and other black people knew they weren't and they passed that on to their kids.

We were held to high expectations, and when you didn't meet them you let everybody down -- parents, family, friends, neighbors. Very few of the Third Ward's young people got to college, but when we lucky few came back home the kids on the corner would tell us to study hard and make it.

So it's tragic that today peer pressure often keeps youngsters from trying harder -- that some of the kids deride school and study as being "white."

But values like education, high expectations, and hard work are what helped black Americans survive the system. Undermining those values today is collaborating with the enemy -- acting as subversive agents for those who want black people to be poor and hopeless.

In fact, school was the third factor that helped us to escape from poverty. We may have been poor, but our teachers didn't judge us by our poverty but by our intellect and our capacity.

We may have used old, outdated and torn textbooks thrown away by Lamar High School, but we kids at Jack Yates High learned from them because our teachers demanded it.

We were segregated and some of us were bused past all-white schools. But we had dedicated teachers who believed in us and who worked hard to help us make something of ourselves.

I still remember Pat Patterson, my Phys Ed teacher at Yates saying: "all that's required to get ahead is to do a little bit better than the other fella." And we knew we had to be better to get ahead.

And we learned pride from our principal, Bill Holland, who asked us why we went to Playland Park on the one day a year when it was open to blacks. "Why do you spend your money there," he said, "when they won't let you in the other 364 days?"

And there was a fourth factor too -- work. Even small children did odd jobs -- delivering newspapers, watering lawns, cleaning up yards.

I had jobs at a grocery, a market, a cafe, a shoe store, and the Y. I shined shoes, ran errands and clerked.

But today's kids don't have those opportunities. They can't get out to the suburban malls where those jobs have moved. The ghetto economy is stagnant, with one job for every twenty kids.

And there's another difference too -- today's kids are seduced by an underground economy that waves illicit dollars in front of them before they're old enough to have absorbed basic values and longer term perspectives.

In my day there were numbers runners and a handful of people who made a few bucks stealing and then disappeared for a couple of years at the county farm. But today, many of our kids are sucked into crime and crack early -- and they take a prison term as part of the game and a sign of manhood.

Not only have times and conditions changed, but the rules have changed too, and too many of our kids are trapped in a self-destructive cycle that dooms them and cripples our communities.

In the past, poor kids had role models in the black businessmen and professionals who lived next door or around the corner. Today they see them only on weekends, when concerned successful African-Americans drive in to do volunteer work.

In the past, our neighborhoods had greater cohesion and enforced a value structure that helped break the cycle of poverty.

Today we see people trying valiantly to do the same, but too often they are overwhelmed by the plague of drugs and crime that corrode their lives, and by callous bureaucrats and exploiters who weaken their neighborhood-building efforts.

In the past, our schools believed in our kids, taught them the pride and the skills they needed to get ahead. Today, too many of our kids are in schools that don't trust them, don't believe in them, and don't care about them.

In the past we looked to our elders who taught us what work was about and who expected us to go to church and to do chores around the house. Today's kids grow up learning values from the television set where murder occurs a hundred times a night and from songs that glorify macho behavior and self-indulgence.

In the past, we grew up revering the Tubmans, the Douglass's, the DuBois's who led our people. Today's kids don't even know who Martin Luther King, Jr. was, don't know about the proud struggles for freedom, don't know about our precious African-American values and culture.

In the past we encountered a racism that was demeaning and brutal. But today's subtle racism may be even more insidious.

Then, we knew the enemy and he flaunted his power and his hatred. Today's racism comes in a brighter package of smiles and nods and unspoken stereotypes. But racism is racism, no matter how it's wrapped.

And it continues to erupt in mindless violence that leaves black youths shot in New York City subways or mobbed when they venture into a white neighborhood.

But the worst effects of racism and grinding poverty are seen in the lack of self-esteem that devalues life and leads our kids to self-destruction.

Again, we have to ask what kind of society permits such horrors to happen ... what kind of society condemns a mass of people to such hopelessness ... what kind of society drives young children to crime, murder and crack.

Things may have been bad in our youth -- but they're infinitely worse for many of today's kids trapped in despairing inner-cities engulfed by conditions more intense than what we had to face.

So while we may speak of the strengths and the perserverance of generations of black folk, we have to recognize that in spite of all the progress we've made -- masses of our brothers and sisters are still victimized by racism -- still mired in poverty -- still held down by situations that must be changed.

So as we go on to our meetings and sessions, let's remember the way it was for us, and they way it is for today's African-American youth.

Let's realize that there are millions of kids out there who don't know our names and don't know what we do, whose fate depends in part on our commitment to them and to all African-American people.

Let us keep in mind the perils they face, the toils and snares they must pass, the dangers life holds for them.

Let us go about our business at this Conference with their cause in our hearts and their interests in our minds.

And let us go about our task with a sense of mission and a sense of urgency.

For, as the old poem says:

I have only just a minute,
Only sixty seconds in it,
Forced upon me -- can't refuse it
Didn't seek it, didn't choose it.

"But its up to me to use it.
I must suffer if I lose it,
Give account if I abuse it.
Just a tiny little minute --
But eternity is in it!"

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# African-American Male Responsibility in Teenage Pregnancy: The Role of Education

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After tracing the current educational and occupational status of adolescent fathers, this article describes a number of community-based programs that were developed for these youth as well as for those who are not yet fathers. The programs are designed to empower adolescents to take charge of their lives and to avoid early parenthood. The expected outcome of these programs is to enhance the self-esteem of these youth, help them find meaning and value in the educational process, and become responsible adults. The article concludes that male responsibility can be perpetuated if African-American adolescents are allowed to experience success in school and at work. In addition, African-American adult males must provide social support for our youth by serving as role models.

The United States is experiencing many changes in her social fabric. One important change affecting the family is an increasing delay in marriage and childbearing. However, at the same time, there has been an increase in the number of adolescent parents. Until recently, parenthood in adolescence was considered solely as a woman's issue, with the adolescent father being viewed as a "shadowy unknown figure, more a culprit than a potential contributor to either the mother or his offspring.[1] Moreover, traditionally the father's role irrespective of his age, has received little attention from social scientists, the legal profession, health care professionals, and policy makers. The quote from Margaret Mead put this issue in perspective, "Fathers are not only a biological necessity but a social accident," and bears witness to this neglect.

To a significant extent, services and research in areas of sexual behavior, pregnancy and parenting have concentrated on teenage females. There is evidence that successful pregnancy prevention programs for adolescents must include males.[2] Recent surveys of cities regarding service programs for pregnant teenagers showed that a majority of cities in the United States have some special programs for pregnant teenagers, but only one fourth of these programs provided services to their male partners.[3] In an extensive review, Earls and Siegel have pointed out the paucity of research available around teenage fatherhood.[4] Significant gains in research on teenage fathers have been achieved, however, since the Earls and Siegel review.[5] The purpose of this article is to present current knowledge about teenage fathers, describe new innovative educational programs, detail how African-American men can participate in this process and suggest policy recommendations for program development.

## CURRENT KNOWLEDGE

In 1983, there were more than 1.1 million pregnancies to women 20 years of age and younger resulting in 499,038 births accounting for 14 percent of all births in the United States.[6] Eighty-five percent of teenage mothers keep their infants rather than place them for adoption.[7] Based on statistical data from the 1983 Urban League report, there were an estimated 1.3 million children living with 1.1 million teenage mothers.[8] In 1977, 143,000 live born infants were fathered by men younger than 20 years of age. The number of births per 1,000 in unmarried 15- to 19-year-olds was over six times greater among non-Whites than Whites.[9] The risk of becoming an adolescent father is higher in African-American and Hispanic males due to higher prevalence of sexual activity and lower use of contraception.[10] Some studies are available on White teenage males who become fathers, but the literature indicates adolescent fatherhood appears to be synonymous with minority, especially African-American males.

Usually a teenage father and his partner are approximately the same age, and in most instances the father of the baby is no more than 4 years older than the mother.[11] The average age of the father in a New Haven study of pregnant girls 17 years of age and younger was 18.5 years, with 66 percent of males in the 17- and 19-year range.[12] In Hendricks' study, 50 percent of the males were 17 years of age or younger when they became fathers,[13] whereas in a descriptive study of 26 teenage fathers from Charlotte, North Carolina, the fathers' mean age was 18.7 years.[14] In most studies, a majority of the adolescent fathers are described as unmarried at the time they became fathers. A majority of them come from low-income families. They are often not in school, frequently work part-time at low wages, or are unemployed. Unemployment among African-American adolescent males in urban areas is approximately 50 percent.[15]

Minority fathers and mothers generally face significantly less favorable occupational opportunities than do majority workers. In general, African-American workers tend to be concentrated in lower-paying, less prestigious occupations. In 1980, only about 33 percent of African-American males were employed in high paying male occupational categories (professionals, managers, salesmen, and craftsmen), while 59 percent of White males were employed in these categories. Similarly, while 32 percent of White women were employed in professional, managerial, and sales categories, only 19 percent of African-American women were so employed.

Educational competence and access to meaningful employment opportunities play a major role in expectations of the adolescent minority fathers.[16] Teenage fathers obtain substantially less education, lower income levels and demonstrate lower academic abilities. In a New Haven study, basic information on fathers was obtained from [illegible] pregnant girls. Fifty percent were employed, 40 percent were enrolled in school, (nearly 50 percent of those in school also worked), and less than 10 percent were out of school and unemployed.[17] In Hendricks' study of 21 African-American adolescent fathers and 21 controls, fathers were less likely to attend any type of school and more likely to be employed.[18] Due to the cross-sectional nature of some studies, however, obtaining information at one point in time in regard to school or employment is likely to lead to an erroneous impression. Overwhelmingly, the evidence suggests that given appropriate support, teenage fathers are anxious to find jobs and finish their education.

The task of parenting and taking on adult responsibilities is a challenging one. Generally, the literature on teenage parenting has focused on three areas: (1) actual behaviors toward the child; (2) knowledge of child development; and (3) attitudes toward parenting.[19] Throughout the literature, two underlying themes emerge. The first is that teenage mothers exhibit parenting practices that differ from those of older mothers. The second is that teenage fathers are not completely willing or prepared to assume a responsible parenting role.[20] Some fathers generally assume marginal roles in rearing their children. However, there is evidence that supports the theory that adolescent fathers want to participate in the parenting experience but are at a disadvantage because of lack of age appropriateness, income, and educational attainment. Family considerations also play a significant role in how the adolescent deals with responsibility.

The elements that seem to be missing for adolescent fathers are access to services, limited understanding on the part of society, and access to appropriate education as a means of prevention. Adolescent fathers who choose to stay involved with their children face a Catch 22 dilemma. For young fathers who drop out of school, it is difficult to support their family without an education. Current data reveal that one-half of African-Americans and one-quarter of Whites who do not have a high school education are unemployed. Thus, it is clear that education and services are important needs of this population.

## THE ADOLESCENT FATHER'S ROLE: COMMITMENTS AND CONCERNS

The father's role is important to the psychological development of both the mother and child. Henderson describes several aspects of this role which include genetic input, facilitation of the real world for the mother during pre- and post-natal periods, role modeling for boys in the pre-Oedipal period of development, separation-individuation process in the child, development of the superego during the Oedipal period, role modeling in post-Oedipal identification, shaping and helping socialization, and cognitive-maturational development.[21] Some providers have speculated that if fathers are given greater opportunities to be involved with their infants in the early neonatal period, they will participate more in infant caretaking in the post-hospital process. This type of interaction is even more important for adolescent fathers.[22]

There are no large scale systematic investigations regarding parental behaviors of adolescent fathers. In many situations, the adolescent male is discouraged from continuing the relationship, thereby creating a perception that he abandoned the expectant mother. A teenage father's absence leads to a common misconception of noncaring among health care providers, who often perceive adolescent fathers as irresponsible, deserters of their children, and not being part of the "teen family."

The divorce rate for teenage parent is five times higher than that of the adult population.[23] However, in a five-year follow-up study of 404 first time pregnant adolescents, Furstenberg found that 21 percent of the fathers were still residing with their children five years after the birth of the child, while 20 percent of the fathers visited their children irregularly.[24] An association was found between naming patterns of the children, and the frequency of paternal contact and child support. In cases where parents were not married but the father visited his offspring at least once a week, 48 percent of the male children had their father's forename and surname. However, in cases where the father did not visit his offspring regularly, only 14 percent of the children had their fathers' names. Children named after their father and having regular contact with him were also more likely to receive financial support.[25]

In the Bank Street College Project at the end of a two-year observation period, 82 percent of approximately 400 teenage fathers had daily contact with their children and 74 percent contributed to the child's financial support.[26] In that same project a longitudinal study of 180 teenage mothers was conducted. It was found that 46 percent were either married to or dating the father of the baby 26 months after delivery, and 64 percent of the mothers were receiving financial support for the infant 3 and 15 months post-partum.[27] In a descriptive study of 26 teenage fathers in the Bank Street Project, approximately 67 percent of the fathers reported maintaining regular contact with the mother of the child.[28] Although the length of the period over which this contact was maintained is not specified in this study, the percentage maintaining contact compares favorably with Furstenberg's study.[29]

## INTERVENTION PROGRAMS FOR ADOLESCENT PARENTS

Some steps have been taken to address the needs of adolescent parents. There are ambitious programs like The Hub in New York's South Bronx. This program was designed five years ago by Planned Parenthood of New York City as a one-step "life options" center to help teenagers take charge of their lives and futures and ultimately avoid early pregnancy. The Hub is a health center as well as a learning center. There are social activities; computer, karate and cooking classes; peer tutoring programs; college and career counseling; and work experience programs. Workshops are also offered for families in sexuality and family values.

The Hub tries to build self esteem in adolescents so that they can make independent decisions about sex. The program has been quite successful helping adolescents understand that sex is a quality of life issue, not a reproductive issue. The program involves teenagers as well as parents, and offers weekly sessions in family life and sex education which link sexuality not just to intercourse but to intimacy, social roles, and feelings. The program's success has been encouraging. Out of 140 adolescents enrolled in the program in over three years, there have been only two pregnancies.

Another program, The nonprofit Comprehensive School Age Parenting Program (CSAPP), provides counseling on health care, nutrition, day care, home tutoring, financial aid, employment and housing. Developed ten years ago at English High School in Boston, Massachusetts, the program is now affiliated with more than twenty hospitals and health centers, and last year received $204,000 from the school board, state, and private grants.

The program was designed to help students juggle parenting and school work. Of the 197 students participating in the program last year, 87 planned to return to school this year, 30 dropped out, 41 graduated, 12 transferred to other schools, and 27 who were uncertain of their school plans, moved out of town or were enrolled in programs to earn their high school diploma.

In 1982, the Chicago chapter of the African-American fraternity Alpha Phi Alpha was working to get teenage males to think about the responsibilities of fatherhood before they became fathers. Alpha projects have been developed in several parts of the country. These projects have been sponsored jointly by the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity and the March of Dimes. They provide young African-American men who have demonstrated some leadership potential an opportunity to particpate in intensive weekend training sessions. One approach focuses on life issues and value formation and is designed to provide intensive, educational sessions on human sexuality, parenting responsibilities, and appropriate decision making.

The Bank Street Project was a large scale project that involved community organizations in eight United States cities. Funded by the Ford Foundation and coordinated by the Bank Street College of Education in New York, the project offered vocational services, counseling, prenatal and parenting classes to approximately 395 teenage fathers and prospective fathers in eight cities. At the end of the two-year program, 61 percent of the previously unemployed teenage fathers were employed and 46 percent of those who had dropped out of school resumed their education.[30]

The Urban League of Eastern Massachusetts (ULEM) developed the Positive Futures Program, a pregnancy prevention program based on the cognitive-behavioral approach. This approach assumes that many pregnancies occur not because teenagers lack information, but because they do not have the behavioral skills necessary to utilize such information. Thus, Positive Futures is designed to provide young adolescent males from single parent families an opportunity to interact with positive role models who will help them explore options for the future.[31] These adolescent males are not fathers and the adult mentors do not moralize upon them. Instead, they try to instill values and skills which will enable the young men to succeed in school, avoid irresponsible sexual behavior, and resist involvement in crime. The program methods are designed to maximize the influence of community institutions in shaping the future of participants over a period of two years.

## A CHALLENGE TO AFRICAN-AMERICAN MEN

The chances of African-American adolescent fathers surviving in America are slim to none if they do not receive support from family, peers, and most importantly, from other adult African-American males. The National Center for Health Statistics can only approximate the number of teenage fathers because it relies solely on birth certificate information to identify them. In 1984, more than 106,000 males under age 19 were listed as fathers. During the same year, 479, 547 babies were born to females under 19. Of those babies, 60 percent had teenage fathers.

The lack of accurate national statistics is due also to the reality that teenage fathers rarely attend health clinics and generally do not trust providers. Dr. Leo Hendricks, a Washington-based consultant, who has devoted eight years to the study of teenage fathers, points out that society has borne the high cost of out of wedlock births, but is still reluctant to commit full resouces to research.

Young adolescent fathers feel the brunt of society's frustration. They are seen as the "perpetrators" and the young mothers as the "victims." In reality, all adolescent parents are victims. But to some extent that is one of the reasons the adolescent father population is a mystery.[32] Teenage males who become fathers are 40 percent more likely than nonparents to drop out of school to seek work, but high paying jobs often elude dropouts. Frequently, they turn to the street to earn easy money.

Much has been written about the context of the African-American family and the important role that African-American men play in providing nurturing, and emotional stability in the family. The most important commodities that African-American men can provide to African-American adolescent fathers are their time, energy, and attention. Several programs exist that provide innovative services to African-American adolescent males, but they are generally limited. On the whole, however, services for African-American adolescent fathers are poor in quality and serve a very small percentage of the eligible population. Most of these programs lack one important commodity; that is, sufficient participation from adult African-American men.

## A CURRICULUM FOR ADOLESCENT FATHERS

Education is one of the most important factors to success for these young men. With this view in mind, the leadership of the Comprehensive School Age Parenting Program (CSAPP) at English High School in Boston, Massachusetts has developed a curriculum for adolescent fathers.[33] The overwhelming majority of the fathers in the program are African-American (98 percent) and the male counselors in the program are African-American. This is the first time that CSAPP has offered a program geared specifically to males, and the curriculum is the first of its kind in Massachusetts.

Information shared in this course enables the young men to express their feelings candidly. Moreover, it helps them to understand that their feelings are not unique. Thus, it is expected to enhance peer support and help them to appraise their role in society realistically. The course makes accessible vital community resources that will aid in the personal and educational growth of these youth. In addition, many participate in employment and mentor relationships that have a life-long impact on their self-esteem. The young fathers participate in day-long activities with their children and are involved in peer support groups. They utilize both the employment resources and most importantly, the educational programs at English High School. The course is offered in the high school for credit and students can enroll through the normal enrollment procedures.

The course consists of 15 sessions with a pre/post test design built into the curriculum. The following areas are adressed:

A. *Effective Social and Environmental Living.* The central focus of this section is on developing an understanding of self. Lectures, group processes, and role playing are utilized to explore peer structure and environmental factors (i.e. home and the community).

B. *Relationship with significant other/partner/girlfriend.* The focus is on communication and responsibility for actions, attitudes, and behaviors. Males also have an opportunity to interact with adolescent females during these sessions.

C. *Coping with stress.* Various techniques in stress management are utilized to help participants develop appropriate coping skills. Questions addressed will include: What is stress? How is stress defined? What are the consequences of stress? Trained professionals assist with these sessions.

D. *Male responsibility and parenting.* Fathers and nonfathers are exposed to bonding with the newborn, developing an appropriate helping relationship during infancy, and the elements of day to day parenting (e.g., importance of a doctor's appointment, shopping for the infant, emotional and psychological support).

E. *Facilitating positive child health and development.* Fathers will be involved with parenting for two full days in a supportive environment with other adolescent fathers. A nurse and pediatrician participate in these sessions. Through direct participation, the young fathers will learn the importance of nurturing their child. The key to these sessions is responsibility.

F. *Importance of personal development.* Sessions focus on traditional versus nontraditional educational programs. Emphasis is placed on the value of a high school or college education.

Overall, the curriculum focuses on decision making and responsibility. A variety of professionals are utilized to assist the young men in the course. The most important feature is direct input from other adult males.

## ENFORCING THE CYCLE OF MALE RESPONSIBILITY

The National Urban League has produced a series of posters aimed at fostering responsibility among teenage fathers. One poster shows an African-American man tenderly holding a young child, and above it is a line from a Billie Holiday song: "God Bless The Child Who's Got His Own." It is hoped that such positive images will help African-American male adolescents to reject the notion of invisibility which makes them feel irrelevant.

The sociocultural reality of the African-American extended family and the reaching out by African-American adults to youth has been misunderstood by some observers to be a character flaw among African-Americans. In fact, it has been suggested that it promotes unacceptable social behavior among adolescents, including teenage pregnancy. Notwithstanding, African-American adults must be aware of the attitudes and messages they transmit to African-American children concerning sexuality, pregnancy and parenting.

One area an adolescent male can count on to test his masculinity and experience is his sexual conquests. Moreover, a baby is often a symbol of pride for the mother and father. But the reality is that many males cannot support these babies financially, and often their emotional support is missing. Such behaviors cause myths and fallacies to be perpetuated. For example, in 1987, CBS aired a documentary on adolescent pregnancy, the "Moyers Report," which projected the stereotype of adolescent pregnancy in the African-American community as the norm.[34] Fallacies that young girls get pregnant to receive a welfare check and that young people are promiscuous and irresponsible were reinforced.

For years, African-American scholars have done research on the family. Organizations such as the National Urban League and African-American sororities and fraternities have been trying to address many of these problems with limited exposure. Recent research indicates that many adolescent fathers are involved with their children. Their involvement varies from making financial contributions to their children, to spending time with their childen.

## RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

There are no "quick fixes" and we cannot afford to moralize upon adolescent parents. A concerted effort is required to address the needs of pregnant and parenting teenagers. However, attention must also be paid to the total population of teenagers at risk. Solutions must be realistic and focus on how society addresses the needs of adolescents and children. Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan proposes that we develop a national policy that would treat families with children (including teenage parents) the way we treat the elderly; that is, with provisions for income indexing and tax breaks. But our track record with the elderly has been poor, and young people do not have a strong political base to ensure that they would fare any better.

Education, prevention and community responsibility are the key ingredients to dealing with the needs of African-American adolescent fathers. Such education must include parents, teachers, community members, and teenagers. Prevention goes hand in hand with exposure to appropriate information that includes sex education, accessibility to contraceptives, educational and career options, and access to appropriate role models. Adult males who work 40-60 hours per week and provide for their families are excellent role models. One does not have to be a movie star or professional athlete to be a role model. We must utilize the many strengths that exist in the African-American community.

Community health care clinics can play an important role in providing education and counseling in sexuality, family planning, health/nutrition, and life options. Further, community groups can assist with career counseling, employment training, and job placement. Success is measured in terms of education and a job. Thus, with appropriate exposure, teenagers will be able to make appropriate decisions and become self-sufficient.

The following recommendations focus on the adolescent father, but they can be applied to the needs of the mother as well:

A. Recognizing the needs of fathers does not imply competition with the mother or separation. It is important to instill RESPONSIBILITY in the father so he can fulfill his emotional and financial obligations. Based on a review of the literature on adolescent fathers, the following areas have been identified for further research:

1. Longitudinal studies with large sample sizes are needed to assess the psychosocial and personality characteristics of adolescent males that may be predictive of behavior on becoming a father.
2. The importance of sexual attitudes, contraceptive knowledge, and behavior of teen males must be explored.
3. Information is needed regarding teenage couples' commitment to each other and the factors in their decision-making process that influence the use of contraception and the continuation of a pregnancy.
4. A better understanding is needed of gender differences in regard to expectations of parenting responsibilities and exploration of the meaning of competent functioning for adolescent males.
5. A better understanding is needed regarding the teenage father's direct and indirect involvement in the mother-infant-father triad.

The absence of sufficient research on adolescent fathers has left a void in our understanding of the male's role in parenting. Thus, we are attempting to provide services to this population without fully understanding their psychological makeup. Research can lead to greater understanding and this work can be directed by African-American scholars.

B. In the area of services, male involvement in family planning, infant health maintenance and development must be encouraged. Frequently the male determines whether he or his partner will use birth control. It is, therefore, important that African-American males understand the implications of RISK and CONSEQUENCES. Information can be provided through the home, community services, health clinics, schools, and the church. The print media are also an excellent avenue for this information, but discussion and direction are needed to make this material useful. Other than the parent and community, the school is probably the most accessible agency to educate adolescent fathers about their responsibility. For instance, many young fathers are totally uninformed of their legal obligation (paternity adjudication and child support).

C. Schools should adopt curricula that are culturally sensitive. They should address family planning and sexuality, and provide access to comprehensive health care services in the community. Support must be provided for adolescents who wish to abstain from sexual activities, and provisions must be made for those who are sexually active to receive contraceptives on a referral basis. Professional counseling and peer interaction are vital to this plan. The Center for Population Options in Washington, D.C. has developed a Life Planning curriculum designed to address the interrelatedness of sexual decision making and future vocational options. The Lanier High School Adolescent Health Education Program in Jackson, Mississippi provides comprehensive health education and a clinic health program in which parents and grandparents are encouraged to participate. (As of April 1985, there were 31 clinics in 18 cities with some 25 more in various stages of development. These centers provide access to services and hopefully better understanding, leading to change in knowledge, attitudes, and behavior.)

D. Existing programs that offer parenting training for fathers in communities should form a network alliance so that services can be better coordinated. Expectant fathers should participate in prenatal and parenting classes so as to be informed about fetal development, the birth process, and child care needs. It is important for African-American males to work with these young fathers. Indeed, direction and guidance from them are critical. In addition, pre-vocational and employment counseling should be provided routinely by agencies servicing young fathers.

E. Hospital maternity wards should provide opportunities for teenage fathers to learn and practice basic child care skills during the early postpartum period. Adolescent fathers should be given paternity leave, counseling around pertinent issues, and information about child development and child care. This can be achieved through training classes in infant development and caretaking. Surrogate grandmothers could assist in facilitating these classes with support from child care facilities and community day care programs.

In the final analysis, the plight of adolescent parents and the particular needs of the father are community responsibilities. In all fairness, though, the issue of adolescent pregnancy cannot be solved solely in the African-American community because it is related to systemic problems of employment, schooling and discrimination. However, the African-American community does need to assume local responsibility. In this regard, the African-American church and fraternal and sororal organizations have taken giant steps and are making a difference. Yet, more information is needed about fathers in regard to parenting and developmental skills.

African-American adult males can act as role models to help strengthen and support adolescent fathers. In addition, each segment of the African-American community must become involved in teaching responsibility and the importance of group identity to males. Our resources for the future rest with our young people. Access to education is the key and direction from African-American adults is the solution.

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# The African-American Adolescent Male and School-Based Health Clinics: A Preventive Perspective

Robert C. Evans and Helen L. Evans

The problems of adolescent health and childbearing are often researched and discussed from the standpoint of the adolescent female because the male's responsibility in adolescent pregnancy and childbearing is often ignored. Based on the high rates of adolescent pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, this article suggests there is a need to provide services to African-American adolescent males. Data obtained from two school-based health clinics in Chicago's inner city show that these clinics are effective in encouraging adolescents to develop positive and informed attitudes about their health, including values about responsible sexual behavior. Contrary to expectation, African-American adolescent male students are heavy users of the clinics.

## AFRICAN-AMERICAN MALES AND SCHOOL-BASED CLINICS

A recent search of journal articles published in the last five years utilizing four data bases (ERIC, Med-Line, Sociological Abstracts, and Psychological Abstracts) produced one journal article that discusses the use of health clinics by African-American adolescent males. The problems of adolescent health and childbearing are often researched and discussed from the standpoint of adolescent females because the male's responsibility in adolescent pregnancy and childrearing is often ignored. However, the high rates of adolescent pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases suggest a need to focus on the health-seeking practices and knowledge of African-American adolescent males.

Clark and his colleagues report that 87 percent of the African-American adolescent males in their sample of 660 junior and senior high school students were sexually active. Thirty percent of the sexuallly active males reported that they or their partner had not used a contraceptive at the time of last intercourse.[1] Forty-one percent of those who used a contraceptive at last intercourse used the condom. This suggests that the male is assuming more responsibility in pregnancy and disease prevention than is generally thought. In the study by Clark et al., it also was found that 41 percent of all the males had impregnated a girl one or more times. This information seems to indicate a need to programmatically focus on helping males to be better users of contraceptives.

The low-income African-American male adolescents in Clark et al.'s study reported the following sources of information about sex and birth control: parents (32 percent), friends (21 percent), books and other printed materials (19 percent), schools (9 percent), clinics (3 percent), and 'other' 16 percent. Even though a majority of the respondents identified their parents as a major source of information, a large percentage stated that their parents would not disapprove of sexual intercourse with a girl, and a smaller percentage indicated that their parents would not care if they got a girl pregnant. With these factors in mind, and given the other sources of information, school-based clinics might be the best source of information available to low-income African-American adolescents.

Zabin et al. found that the younger African-American adolescent males in their study were more likely than older males to use the birth control clinic.[2] If this finding is generalizable and males are more motivated at younger ages, then school-based clinics should target junior high school males (grades 7-8). Sonenstein reports that males are not responsive to the medical model of service delivery.[3] Patricia Davis-Scott, Director of Toward Teen Health with the Ounce of Prevention Fund in Chicago, Illinois, observes that African-American males come to their school-based clinics for health care and information.[4] The clinics provide a safe place for them to talk, and frequently serious health problems unknown to the adolescent might be diagnosed. The latter points to the need for school-based clinics in low-income communities.

## AFRICAN-AMERICAN MALE DEVELOPMENT

There are several critical factors in a male's development that will influence his decisions regarding sexual activity, use of contraceptives by himself and his partner, and general health care behaviors. The factors that seem most important are community, family and the male adolescent himself.

The community provides a sense of values which the adolescent uses as part of his decision-making process. It is important that the community values open communication regarding sexual behavior and contraceptives. The Chicago school-based health clinics operated by The Ounce of Prevention Fund were formed with the support of the local communities. The clergy, medical community, schools, city government and parents had some say in the clinics' program design. These community leaders recognized that the critical health issues of low-income African-American adolescents that were of primary concern were: (1) high infant mortality; (2) high teenage pregnancy (at one of the schools, one third of the females were pregnant during the year prior to the clinic's opening); and (3) the tremendous lack of pediatric health services.

The overall life goals and values of adolescents are tied to the resources available to them in their community. Health is one of these very important resources. The kind of life goals the adolescent has will influence his decision to become an adolescent father. His life goals also are influenced largely by role models (for boys, male models are critical). In order for older males to provide effective models, they must find and/or create resources within their community. The involvement of the assortment of male community leaders in the development of the Chicago school-based clinics demonstrated that there were positive value-oriented older males that the younger males could strive to emulate.

The family provides physical care, emotional care, social support and practical life knowledge to young males. In this regard, the family influences the kinds of things the male will or will not do. Clark et al. found that males who talked with their parents about sex, countraceptives and teenage fatherhood were more likely to use birth control.[5] The reinforcement that parents provide to males for their behavior shapes the adolescent's actions, goals and attitudes. More importantly, adolescents learn from the example set by their parents. In the final analysis, the adolescent male himself must ultimately be clear about his values, especially those regarding sexual activity and fatherhood.

## DUSABLE AND ORR HIGH SCHOOL ADOLESCENT HEALTH CENTERS

In Chicago, the school-based clinics are an important method for encouraging African-American males to develop positive values about their health, including values about responsible sexual behavior. The Ounce of Prevention Fund administers school-based health clinics in three Chicago high schools. Since the clinic at Richard Crane High School opened in the Fall of 1987 and year-end statistics were not available at the time of this writing, the discussion will be limited to DuSable and Orr clinics that were opened earlier. Both of these clinics require parental permission for students to receive service unless there is a medical emergency. The clinics provide a comprehensive array of services; such as:

Immunization Series
Diagnosis of Sexually Transmitted Diseases
Family Planning
Pregnancy Diagnosis
Prenatal Care
Postpartum Exams
Psychosocial Screening
Child Abuse Screening
Health Maintenance
Acute General Medicine
Chronic General Medicine
First Aid
General Gynecology
Mental Health
Health Education

DuSable's Katherine Bogan Health Center opened in June of 1985. It serves currently enrolled students, who must have a permission slip signed by their parents on file in the clinic. DuSable's student population as of September 1986 was 1,955 (female—966, male—989); of this total, 1,399 (female—737; male—662) had signed permission slips on file in the clinic. During the 1986-87 academic year, there were 4,320 visits (female—3,030; male—1,290), made to the clinic.

**TABLE 1**
**Health Services Provided for Students at DuSable**
**School Years 1985-86 and 1986-87**
**(Number of Students Served)**

| | June 30, 1986 | June 30, 1 |
|---|---|---|
| Immunization Series | 101 | 76 |
| Diagnosis of Sexually Transmitted Diseases | 169 | 158 |
| Ongoing Family Planning | | |
| Female | 120 | 361 |
| Male | 198 | 155 |
| Diagnosis of Pregnancy | 61 | 50 |
| Comprehensive Prenatal Care | 44 | 20 |
| Deliveries | 11 | 23 |
| Psychosocial Screening | 420 | 305 |
| Child Abuse Cases Filed | 11 | 2 |

Number of Clinic Visits by Type of Service
School Years 1985-86 and 1986-87

| | June 30, 1986 | June 30, 1 |
|---|---|---|
| Acute General Medicine | 1,494 | 1,716 |
| Chronic General Medicine | 251 | 354 |
| First Aid (includes some students without permission slips on file) | 292 | 97 |
| Health Maintenance | 1,145 | 678 |
| General Gynecology | 484 | 329 |

Table 1 shows the DuSable service data for the 1985-86 and 1986-87 academic y It can be seen that the largest number of clinic visits were for acute general medicin the 1985-86 academic year, the first year of the clinic, there was a sizeable numb health maintenance visits representing physical examinations and preventive he care services. The latter might reflect the high initial need for health care services in medically underserviced community. The clinic also offers a comprehensive se services including mental health (1,324 participants in 1986-87) which are not sh on Table 1.

The above data from DuSable indicates that males are just as likely as females t enrolled in the clinic. However, females made more clinic visits in both years and m accounted for slightly more than one quarter of such visits. Given the generally low of utilization of medical and family planning clinics by African-American adoles males, this figure seems encouragingly high. With regard to family planning, m made more than one-half and close to one-third of the total visits in 1985-86 1986-87 respectively. This is very positive and suggests that the program offers appropriate approach to service delivery.

Orr's Adolescent Health Center opened in August 1986. It, too, serves curre enrolled students who have written parental permission. In September 1986, school's total enrollment was 1,894 (females—900; males—994); 1,129 (females—

males—575) had signed permission slips on file in the health clinic. There were 3,485 clinic visits (females—2,592; males—893) in the 1986-87 academic year. As can be seen in Table 2, most of the visits were for acute general medicine and health maintenance. Many students received family planning services and immunizations (many students needed these to continue in school). In addition, there were 1,528 mental health visits and 1,309 health education participants which are not shown in Table 2.

The Orr data are similar to DuSable's in that males are just likely as females to be registered with the clinic. However, while males only account for slightly more than one-fourth of Orr's total clinic visits, they represent a little less than one-third of the family planning visits, which is very encouraging. As was true for DuSable, Orr's students are in serious need of general health care. Students with general health concerns are helped to understand how to take better care of their health. Interestingly, first aid is not a high service need for either school. This seems somewhat surprising but might indicate that more serious kinds of health issues predominate among low-income African-American high school students.

At both Orr and DuSable, there are a large number of clinic visits for mental health and health education. Both of these services are very central to the service model of the clinics. Every student is offered individual and group counseling on a variety of health issues (i.e. nutrition, hygiene, sexuality, substance abuse, birth control, etc.). The psychosocial screening process has identified many troubled student situations that caused or had the potential of producting stress for the students. These persons are helped individually and in groups.

**TABLE 2**
**Health Services Provided for Students at Orr**
**School Years 1986-87**
**(Number of Students Served)**

| | June 30, 1987 |
|---|---|
| Immunization Series | 356 |
| Diagnosis of Sexually Transmitted Diseases | 42 |
| Ongoing Family Planning Services | |
| Female | 246 |
| Male | 108 |
| Diagnosis of Pregnancy | 66 |
| Comprehensive Prenatal Care | 40 |
| Deliveries | 25 |
| Psychosocial Screening | 442 |
| Child Abuse Cases Filed | 12 |

**Number of Clinic Visits by Type of Service**
**School Year 1986-87**

| | June 30, 1987 |
|---|---|
| Acute General Medicine | 1,074 |
| Chronic General Medicine | 111 |
| First Aid | 82 |
| Health Maintenance | 1,222 |
| General Gynecology | 460 |

The staff at Orr and DuSable Health Centers are basically the same. They inc medical director, an administrative director who also serves other clinics, a pediat an obstetrician/gynecologist, an internist, a nurse practitioner, a counselor/ worker, a medical assistant, a health educator, and a secretary. All of the servic medicines are free of charge. Each student who registers with the clinic is seen as s possible for a complete physical examination and psychosocial evaluation.

## DISCUSSION

In the school-based clinic, the teenagers receive comprehensive health care serv no cost. The services are easily accessible and the adolescents clearly are taking a tage of them. Most of the clinic visits (75 percent) are for health needs unrela family planning. Having a clinic that serves only enrolled students encourages attendance, which benefits the students and the schools. While providing good care, it increases the students' availability for learning as well as the school's dai pupil allowance from the state of Illinois. Moreover, those students who have concerns have ready access to health care services and counseling. In additio pregnancy outcomes of female students have been enhanced by the availabi continued health care. More importantly, parents demonstrate their interest and of responsibility by giving written permission for their children to utilize the services.

Clark et al. indicates that a significant number of African-American adolescent in their study were willing to tolerate unprotected intercourse and were embarra buy any kind of birth control substance or device in a store. Additionally, the re ents in the same study valued having children at an earlier age more than th marriage. Each of these attitudes points to the need for the education provided clinics regarding the problems of teenage parenthood and the available altern DuSable and Orr High School Clinics provide a great deal of counseling and tional services. However, it is important that all junior and senior high school st have, at the least, health education and counseling services available in their s This might help them to learn appropriate problem-solving and decision-makin about teenage sexual involvement.

Patricia Davis-Scott (Director of School Clinics) noted that the focus of the clinics was on the "unwellness" states of the adolescent population which m associated with school dropout, teenage pregnancy, depression, and violence. Mo the clinics provide a place for the students to go and talk about their problems. some students might come to the clinic for minor health reasons, sometimes th have serious health and emotional problems which are diagnosed and treated.

For the most part, male students are as concerned about diseases and informa female students. Many of the males who use the school clinics do so independe their girl friends. Mostly, they come for physical examinations for sports, and to condoms. In this regard, the clinic provides a safe place where they can get reliable information. The males have been able to trust this. They are empowered clinic to make decisions about their health care, thus increasing their self-esteem and sense of control. Males ages 14-19 in grades 9-12, are described by Davis-Scott as being very sensitive about health problems and how they might impact their female friends. Education and counseling helps in this regard.

Davis-Scott notes, however, that the male users of the clinic do not comply with follow-up health care when they feel better. Nonetheless, the participatory environment of the clinics seems to be conducive to maintaining male involvement. In summary, it is emphatically reiterated that educating African-American male adolescents about their responsibilities regarding contraception and fatherhood are necessary services and should be provided to all junior and senior high school students.

## NOTES

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# Dispelling Myths About Teenage Pregnancy and Male Responsibility: A Research Agenda

Betty J. Watson, Cyprian L. Rowe, and Dionne J. Jones

The growth in poverty has been linked with the issue of teenage pregnancy and male irresponsibility. This article presents evidence to dispel many commonly held beliefs about the nature and magnitude of poverty, and its relationship to teenage pregnancy. It challenges the popular view that poverty is caused by the values or lack of values of young males and females. The advancement of this position has resulted in a shift away from seeking systemic socioeconomic solutions, to more person-oriented solutions. That is, the focus is on the value system of teenagers instead of on advancing full employment policy and antipoverty strategies. While we do not question the worthiness of an intact value system, we believe that more concerted efforts need to be placed on systemic solutions to the problem of teenage pregnancy. Thus, the article concludes with suggestions for a research agenda.

Over the last few years, teenage pregnancy has been given considerable attention by the media. Bill Moyer's show, "The Vanishing African-American Family," Leon Dash's seven part series in the *Washington Post* and Charles Murray's book, *Losing Ground*,[1] have collectively transmitted to the public a broad set of misconceptions relative to: (1) the nature and magnitude of the teenage pregnancy "problem" and (2) the relationship of teenage pregnancy to poverty. The public has been saturated with a set of ideas that shift the causes of poverty to the behaviors and values of young males and females. Indeed, the linkages between poverty, teenage pregnancy, male responsibility, the "underclass," constitute an entire system of thought which is used to explain stagnation in African-American socioeconomic development.

Using this intellectual structure, public policy advocates have retreated from systemic socioeconomic solutions to more person-oriented ones. Specifically, attention has been turned away from a full employment policy, and residential and educational integration. Instead, policy-makers have embraced public and private efforts toward a "national family policy" as an antipoverty strategy. In accordance with such reasoning, then, various congressional committees have studied welfare reform and other federal programs and policies in order to formulate new strategies that address not only poverty, but also the dysfunctional behavioral problems of the poor and disadvantaged. An example of this is the new welfare reform bill hurriedly passed in September 198 entitled "The Family Support Act of 1988." This legislation effectively maintains families on below-poverty-level benefits as long as they provide community services. Mor effective strategies for combating poverty would be to provide education, training, and placement of these families in jobs with real wages.

In some respects, these efforts were misguided for they came out of a basic misunderstanding of the relationship between teenage pregnancy and poverty. Even more distressing, existing misinformation continues to forestall and preclude the creation of programs and policies that could intervene into the *total* process by which adverse socioeconomic forces are transformed into behavioral dysfunction at the individual level. This article presents evidence that modifies and/or dispels many commonly held beliefs about the nature and magnitude of poverty and its relationship to teenage pregnancy. It also examines the relationship between beliefs about poverty, teenage pregnancy, and intervention programs.

## THE NATURE AND MAGNITUDE OF TEENAGE PREGNANCY

At the first level there exists confusion relative to basic statistics about teenage pregnancy. Part of the confusion arises out of interpretations of the raw data. There is also an absence of clarity regarding research in this area. In many instances, interventions are not based upon research findings. Thus, it becomes critical to examine theory and data regarding teenage pregnancy and poverty.

**Myth #1: Teenage pregnancy is increasing.** An assertion often made is that teenage pregnancy is increasing. Teenage pregnancy is not increasing, but is actually decreasing. In 1960, there were 594,000 births to women under age twenty. In 1984, there were 480,000 births to such women. By 1986, this number had decreased to 472,081 births.[2]

**Myth #2: Teenage pregnancy is the major source of out-of-wedlock births.** Teenage pregnancy is not the major source of out-of-wedlock births. In 1986, approximately 65 percent of all births to unmarried women were to those twenty years of age and older. In contrast, women over age twenty comprised only 59.5 percent of out-of-wedlock births in 1960.[3]

**Myth #3: African-American teenagers constitute the majority of out-of-wedlock births and teenage pregnancies.** Historically, the *level* of out-of-wedlock births in the African-American community has exceeded the *level* in the White community. However, the White community has experienced a greater *increase* in out-of-wedlock births than has the African-American community. In 1960, 63.2 percent of all out-of-wedlock births were to African-American and "other" race unmarried women. In 1986, this proportion had decreased to 48 percent. The African-American proportion of all *teenage* pregnancies is even lower. In 1986, *less than 30 percent* of all teenage pregnancies were to African-American teenagers.[4]

**Myth #4: Teenage pregnancy is the major cause of the large number of female-headed households among African-American Americans.** Fewer than 38 percent of African-American out-of-wedlock births are to teenagers. Thus, teenage pregnancy is not the major factor in the formation of single-family households by African-American females. Moreover, in 1986, more than 60 percent of African-American female heads of households were comprised of separated, divorced, and/or widowed females rather than never-married women[5]

**Myth #5: Female-headed households are the major causes of the recent increase in poverty.** Family structure is related to poverty. However, the increase in female-headed households does not, by itself, explain the post-1979 increase in poverty. Indeed, a greater proportion of female-headed households were poor in 1959 than in 1986.[6] Furthermore, the greatest increase in poverty since 1980 has been among White male-headed households. Thus, analysts must be careful when making such linkages.

**Myth #6: Teenage pregnancy poses a significant financial burden for the country.** Considerable attention has been directed to the "financial burden" of teenage mothers and their children upon all levels of government. However, a 1986 hearing by the House Ways and Means Committee reported that in 1979 only 3.8 percent of AFDC payments were to mothers age 18 or under. By 1983, this percent had decreased to 3.3 percent.[7] Furthermore, fewer than half (46.5 percent) of 1982 AFDC recipients were persons who had not been married to the father of their child.[8] Recent studies have estimated that nationally, teenage pregnancy cost the state and federal government $16.65 billion in 1985.[9] But studies have failed to point out that this amount constituted less than two-tenth of one percent of total *direct* state and federal government expenditures in 1985. If indirect expenditures are included, the proportion becomes even smaller.

**Myth #7: Teenage pregnancy leads to the formation of an underclass through permanent welfare dependency.** The linkages between teenage pregnancy and welfare dependency are far from "proven." Furthermore, the permanence of welfare dependency has been exaggerated. The concept of the underclass implies the emergence of a social group for which socioeconomic mobility is virtually impossible. Again, however, empirical data does not fully support this conclusion. Indeed, the proportion of AFDC recipients who stay on AFDC for six years or more have actually declined since 1975. In 1975, 25.6 percent of all AFDC recipients had received payments for six or more years. In 1982, this proportion had fallen slightly, to 24.1 percent.[10] Disaggregated by race, African-American females have a 19 percent probability of remaining on AFDC for four years or longer in comparison to a 7 percent probability among White females[11]

**Myth #8: Teenage pregnancy is related to an increase in the proportion of children, and particularly African-American children, living in poverty.** First, the proportion of children living in poverty has actually decreased. In 1959, 26.9 percent of related children under 19 years existed in poverty. This percentage decreased to 13.8 percent by *1969*. From 1969 to 1979, it increased slightly, to 16 percent. In *1986*, the proportion had risen to 20.1 percent. This increase, however, has been greatest among White, not African-American children. In 1959, 66.7 percent of related African-American children under 18 years of age were in poverty. This proportion fell to 40.3 percent in 1979 and increased to 45.1 percent in 1986. It is important to note that while the figures are high, there are fewer African-American children in poverty today (both absolutely and relatively) than 25 years ago.

**Myth #9: Teenage pregnancy and out-of-wedlock births are an indication of low sel esteem of the female.** Popular sentiment holds that low self-esteem is a causal factor teenage pregnancy. However, a study by Linda Held, "Self-Esteem and Social Netwo of the Young Pregnant Teenager," contradicts this assertion.[12] Held administered t self-esteem inventory test to a sample of 62 pregnant teenagers. She found that t African-American teenagers who chose to keep their babies scored higher in self-estee while simultaneously rating the pregnancy as unacceptable social behavior.

**Myth #10: Children of female-headed households are more likely to engage in deli quency and other antisocial behaviors.** Several studies have indicated that femal headed household status *alone* is not the most critical determinant of socially dysfun tional behavior among children. Indeed, research by Sheppard Kellam on Africa American family structure in the city of Chicago indicated that African-Americ children in mother/grandmother family structures are no more likely to engage antisocial behaviors than are children in mother/father families.[13] Kellam's researc also revealed that children from two-parent households which included a step-pare exhibited approximately the same level of antisocial behavior as children in sin parent households. Further, research by Robert Hill which used data from the Natior Urban League's Black Pulse Survey, indicates that the total life experience of Africa American children from one and two parent households may be more similar th different.[14] For example, Hill indicates that nearly the same proportion of Africa American children go to college from one-parent low income families as from tw parent low income families.

## TEENAGE PREGNANCY, MALES, AND FAMILIAL RESPONSIBILITY

In addition to the described erroneous presuppositions about the magnitude a nature of teenage pregnancy, there are a related set of misconceptions about the r and behavior of teenage fathers. Particularly negatively implicated in this concept scenario are African-American males. Several presuppositions have been integrated the public toward the general conclusion that higher levels of teenage pregnancy a out-of-wedlock births among African-American females is reflective of low levels African-American male responsibility. While little research and data are available African-American teenage fathers, existing data on African-American males do fully support the "irresponsibility" thesis. Several examples of myths concerning African-American male can also be cited.

**Myth #11: African-American males do not pay child support.** While a smaller prop tion of African-American than White females are awarded child support (36.3% 70.6% respectively), 74.6 percent of White males and 72 percent of African-Ameri males paid 77.4 percent of the full amount due. African-American males did nearl well by paying 69.3 percent of the full amount due.[15]

**Myth #12: African-American males do not pay alimony.** In 1985, 24.4 percen White females who were awarded alimony received payments. While a smaller prop tion of African-American females were awarded alimony, 39.8 percent of those awarded alimony received payments.[16]

**Myth #13: African-American fathers abandon their children.** While the proportion of African-American males and females who marry after conception is lower than the proportion for Whites, both data and research indicate that there is African-American male involvement with their children. In American society, few family groups with children under 18 are maintained by the fathers alone. However, the proportion of such households headed by African-American males is actually greater than that of their White counterparts. In 1984, 3.3 percent of African-American households with children were tended by African-American males in comparison to 2.8 percent of White families. Of greater interest is the fact that in 1987, 33 percent of African-American men who raised their children alone were not married to the mother.[17]

This list of myths and misconceptions is not exhaustive. It is sufficient, however, to point out the need for a more careful analysis of existing data and research on teenage pregnancy. Equally compelling is the need for more extensive research on the African-American male's attitudes, beliefs, and values relative to family and familial responsibilities.

## TEENAGE PREGNANCY INTERVENTION PROGRAMS: THE EMBODIMENT OF MYTHS

Over the last decade, numerous intervention programs have been designed for teenage mothers and their children.[18] Some intervention programs are based upon the assumption that early parenthood has certain adverse effects upon the life of the mother, such as interrupted education and birth complications. Thus, the focus of such programs ranges from efforts to maintain school attendance through the provision of child care to efforts to reduce child abuse by the teenage mother.[19] For example, the Children's Aid Society of Utah designed and implemented a program to teach teenage mothers how to care for their children.[20] Another group created a project that brought teenage mothers with infants and toddlers together in order to provide a support system for the mothers.[21]

In contrast to programs such as these, which seek to ameliorate only a few of the adverse effects of teenage parenting, the Continuing Education for Young Women (CEYW) program in Kalamazoo, Michigan is based upon a holistic strategy for addressing the needs of teenage mothers.[22] Such intervention programs seek to improve the life quality of the teenage mother as well as the quality of the parent-child interaction and are consistent with existing theory and data. They are based upon the premise that independently of the magnitude of the teenage pregnancy problem, positive socioeconomic outcomes may be negotiated through public and private efforts, Clearly, additional programs of this type are needed.

Beyond this point, actual and suggested intervention strategies have become as muddled as existing beliefs and misconceptions on the teenage pregnancy issue. Because both scholars as well as the media have transmitted the notion that teenage pregnancy is an increasing social and financial burden to the country, some extreme strategies hav been suggested.[23] The actual enactment of measures to reduce the alleged teenag pregnancy-related increase in the welfare burden has led to programs to hold teenag fathers and their families financially responsible for the mother and child.[24] Of ever greater concern is a renewed interest in the possible use of involuntary sterilization.[2 Such draconian solutions are proposed because the public has overestimated the magnitude of the problem.

The intellectual confusion over the nature of the problem has constrained the construction of effective strategies in other respects. For example, recent evidence ha indicated that the most "at-risk" group for pregnancy-related physical problems ma not be teenagers, but low income older mothers.[26] Yet, federal programs to service thi population have been reduced and privately funded programs have been directed toward the teenage mother (middle income teenage mothers may be the group least ir need of special obstetric care). Again, this commentary does not imply that teenage mothers *do not* need such programs. Rather, it points to the urgent need by other poor women for similar programs.

Similarly, the public and private sectors have adopted the "low incentive/weak values" paradigm and have proceeded to construct options for teenage and other AFDC recipients which emphasize the mother's entry into the labor force. Yet, there exists a basic contradiction in such strategy. Overwhelming support exists in the literature documenting that the major variable correlated with socialization problems in children is not *family* structure but parent-child interaction.[27] That is, nonerratic, thoughtful and consistent use of parental discipline, ease and quality of communications, are key factors in the development of healthy children.

Given such data, the efficacy of a "pro-family" strategy designed to add the children of AFDC recipients to the growing pool of "latch-key" children must be questioned Rather, the research suggests the need for parental skills training classes for teenage parents. Such programs would also need to include an interpersonal skills training component. (One such approach was successfully tried by Steven Schinke and Lewayne P. Gilchrist in Seattle, Washington.)[28]

Although a African-American AFDC recipient has only a 19 percent probability of remaining on AFDC for eight years or more, the belief that teenage pregnancy has led to the formation of an underclass of intergenerational welfare dependents has triggered a programmatic emphasis upon "self-sufficiency." Yet, the central problem transcends the issue of mere self-sufficiency. A nation that places great value on work has a *moral* responsibility to make work available for every potential worker. Thus, to speak of self-sufficiency, without full-employment is inherently contradictory.

Ralph Segalmon and Alfred Himelson in *The Futurist* also exemplify the faulty strategies that flow out of the defective existing analysis of the problem.[29] They postulate a need for divorce courts to order and enforce child support. Yet, evidence indicates that African-American males as well as White males are quite responsive to court-ordered child support. Further, they suggest that private rather than public funds provide relief to poor families. However, the proportion of private philanthropic funds allocated to social welfare was smaller in 1984 (22.4%) than in 1970 (31.1%).[30]

Teenage pregnancy is often seen as the result of a failure of values on the part of teenagers. Using this view, programs have been designed to promote "responsible" sexual behavior of teenagers through sex education and contraceptive counseling.[31] According to a recent study, most Americans approve of such strategies.[32] Few analysts, however, have pointed out that such strategies embody a basic contradiction in values—sex is "O.K." behavior, but pregnancy is "not O.K."[33] More importantly, research indicates that teenage pregnancy is often the consequence of the embracing of American values. Specifically, American youth are sometimes acting out a romantic love ritual which links sex, love, reproduction, and marriage. Joseph W. Scott, for example, found that high value attachment to "love" was most explanatory of teenage pregnancy in his sample of 123 teenage mothers.[34]

## A RESEARCH AGENDA

The examples provided clearly demonstrate several informational areas of need. First, there exists a need for the reexamination and reinterpretation of existing census data. Empirical knowledge of the teenage pregnancy issue is clouded by several factors. Analysts often confuse universes when describing the data. For example, the proportion of the poor who are children has increased, but the proportion of children who are poor has decreased. Further, both the media and social scientists confuse levels, proportions, rates of change, and absolute versus relative changes. For example, while the level of out-of-wedlock births in the African-American community exceeds the level in the White community, Whites account for a higher proportion of total out-of-wedlock births than do African-Americans.

Similarly, the rate of increase in White out-of-wedlock births is nearly double the rate of increase in African-American out-of-wedlock births. The public is subjected to absolute numerical quantities when percentages would be more appropriate. When the public hears, for example, that $8 billion is now spent on teenage pregnancy, such data must be contexted by stating what percentage of total state and federal expenditures is represented by the $8 billion.

Second, effective programs to address teenage pregnancy must be based on new research paradigms which ask and answer different questions than those currently being addressed. For example, rather than using systemic and/or behavioristic models of the problem, models must be created which identify the direct linkages between individual decision-making behavior and systemic forces. Thus, researchers must ask "What are the psychosocial mechanisms by which unemployment, race- and class-based gender models, spatial segregations, among other things, insinuate themselves into the behaviors acted out by teenagers?"

Third, there exists a need for broad dissemination of accurate data about teenage pregnancy. Not only is the general public subjected to misinformation, but such distortions are also being perpetuated by the "experts." The increase in female-headed households among African-Americans is very much a African-American middle clas problem rather than a teenage pregnancy-induced underclass problem. Contemporary African-American poverty is growing fastest among African-Americans with one or more years of college. These facts require different solutions than those which would be needed if prevailing myths were indeed true.

Fourth, intervention strategies must reintegrate the teenage father into the mother-child relationship. While there are few studies of the teenage father, there are even fewer programs targeted towards the father. Moreover, programmatic effectiveness is somewhat reduced because little is known about the fathers' attitudes, beliefs, values, and behavior. For example, do males encourage females to keep the baby? Do males also link sex, love, reproduction, and marriage, or do they see sex as recreational? Do males' own role model expectations shape their response to a pregnancy? While little is known about all teenage fathers, even less is known about African-American teenage fathers. Thus, these four areas are of critical importance if intervention strategies are to be directly linked to the nature and magnitude of the problem.

In view of these considerations, it would be difficult to mount effective educational and promotional campaigns without understanding the attitudes and motivations of the target groups, and the way demographics and personal factors affect them. Thus, some additional areas for further research are:

- The effects of age, gender, education, family background, and community context on knowledge and attitude of African-American adolescents;
- Assessing the knowledge of rights and responsibilities of fathers in general and unwed African-American fathers in particular;
- Assessing the beliefs and attitudes about legal paternity and child support requirements;
- Systematic examination of the effects of involving young African-American fathers in teenage pregnancy programs, stability of plans for the baby, rates of establishing paternity, child support payment or personal involvement with children.

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# Adolescent Fathers: The Question of Paternity

Judith L. Rozie-Battle

This article analyzes pertinent legislation and court decisions as they affect adolescent fathers. It addresses paternity issues, child support concerns, and the legal rights and responsibilities of unwed and/or adolescent fathers, with a focus on their concerns. It concludes with the recommendation that communities develop improved programs to aid potential teenage fathers in understanding their rights and responsibilities.

The continuing concern over adolescent pregnancy rates generates concern for adolescent mothers and their offspring. The services developed focus on the female, who is perceived as the victim, and her child. Little effort has been geared toward the father of the child, who is perceived as the perpetrator.[1]

This attitude toward adolescent fathers is really not much different from the attitude of society toward fathers in general. Historically, the role of the father has been downplayed. The psychological and developmental needs of the child have been delegated as a responsibility and obligation of the mother. The father has not been viewed as a parent, he has only been perceived as a spouse/partner for the mother of the child. "To state the matter bluntly, except for his financial contribution, the father is a disposable parent."[2] In the case of adolescent fathers, the financial contribution is lacking or so miniscule that he indeed is a disposable parent in the eyes of society.

Only recently have a small number of agencies begun to include males in their programs for adolescent parents. The literature is just beginning to look at the importance of the adolescent father in the development and rearing of his offspring and as a support person to his partner. Researchers must look at the impact of adolescent fatherhood on the teenage male, the child, and the child's mother in order for service agencies to begin to develop and render appropriate services for these young men.

This article examines paternity issues, child support issues, and legal rights and responsibilities relevant to unwed and/or adolescent fathers. Pertinent court decisions and their impact on adolescent fathers are reviewed and analyzed. The focus is on the concerns for African-American adolescent fathers. This focus is important because of the high pregnancy rates in the African-American community, and the fact that the

African-American population is a very young population. Since the birth rate fo younger adolescents has risen, a higher birth rate in the African-American communit can be expected. In addition, the out-of-wedlock rate for African-American female ages 15 to 19 is six times greater than for their White counterparts.[3]

## PATERNITY

Paternity, which is defined as "the state or condition of a father; the relationship of father,"[4] is quite significant in all societies. In Western society, several factors mak paternity important. Without an established legal father, a child is deprived not only o child support, but also of entitlements to other rights derived through parentage. Thes rights include Social Security, veteran's and worker's disability benefits. In addition, anc of extreme importance, the child also loses family heritage, identity, and emotiona support.[5]

There are essentially two ways to establish paternity. First, the natural father can through his own volition, publicly acknowledge paternity. However, some states and th Uniform Parentage Act §§ 4, 6, require the mother's consent.[6] The father may acknowledge paternity in several ways: 1) by placing his name on the birth certificate; 2) throug his conduct toward the child; or 3) by subsequent marriage to the mother of the child

The second method of establishing paternity is through a judicial determination known as a paternity suit or paternity adjudication. Historically, judicial means o ascertaining paternity have existed in all states. They assist welfare authorities who ar otherwise left to support the child. Traditionally, the action was of limited scope and th primary objective was to charge the father with a duty to support his child.[7]

Paternity actions are generally viewed as civil, as opposed to criminal, proceeding Thus, the required standard of proof is a *preponderance of the evidence*. This standard i defined as "evidence which is of greater weight or more convincing than the evidenc which is offered in opposition to it; that is, evidence which as a whole shows that the fac sought to be proven is more probable than not."[8] There are a few courts that require th same evidentiary standard as in criminal proceedings—proof beyond a reasonabl doubt. Still, a few others utilize the intermediate standard of proof referred to as "clea and convincing evidence," which is utilized in other civil proceedings such as termination of parental rights.

Until 1984, the statute of limitations on paternity actions varied from state to state This is not unusual, since there is no uniform national family law. Traditionally, domestic relations have been left to the control of the state legislatures and courts, unless state statute was in violation of the United States Constitution or federal legislation Prior to 1984, the states' statutes of limitation on paternity actions varied from one yea to eighteen years. In 1982, the U.S. Supreme Court made it clear that a one-year statut of limitation on support claims by illegitimate children violated the Equal Protectio Clause by imposing a burden on these children not imposed on legitimate children. The Court went further in 1983 when it struck down a statute of limitation with a two year period.[10] Finally in 1984, federal child support legislation required that all state permit the establishment of paternity of any child at any time prior to such child's eighteenth birthday."[11]

Recent developments in the area of parentage include a Michigan decision where the appellate court found that the state's newly amended paternity statute of limitation (in accordance with federal requirements) could be applied retroactively to cases involving children born before its effective date.[12] In Texas, the appellate court found that a paternity suit may be filed after the death of the alleged biological father.[13]

A 1983 study conducted by Battle indicated that most African-American adolescent fathers were unaware of the linkages between legal paternity and benefits to the child. These same fathers were fairly well informed about how paternity was established, but there were exceptions. For example, 65.2 percent of the fathers knew paternity had to be established before the father could be required to provide child support.[14]

It is not clear that these young African-American men realize that fatherhood during adolescence makes them responsible for all the children they produce for at least the next eighteen years. This responsibility consists of more than financial support, although the monetary expectations may be the most frustrating. As indicated, state courts are interpreting the federal legislation very strictly and are holding young fathers responsible for these children at any point during the child's first eighteen years of life. So, even if a young man has not provided support for his child in the past, it does not mean that he will never be held responsible.

Information regarding paternity is important to African-American adolescent males in order to assist them in making responsible decisions regarding sexual activity and potential fatherhood. These young men must be made aware of the laws that protect the rights of their offspring born out of wedlock. Under the recent federal legislation and the general push from society to make fathers financially accountable to their children, these young men must realize there are long term consequences for their activities. The families, churches, schools, community, and social service agencies that have contact with these young men must provide them with knowledge that allows them to make informed and responsible decisions.

## CHILD SUPPORT

Historically, child support was an obligation imposed primarily on fathers. As the traditional wage earners, they had an obligation to support their children. This obligation was particularly critical following divorce or in situations where the parents never married, because these families then became vulernable and more likely to depend on public assistance for support.

Today, although in theory the child support obligation can be imposed on both parents equally, this is not the case in practice. This holds despite the trend of many states to modernize their statutes so as to hold both parents equally responsible and despite the court decisions that find the traditional support duty imposed on fathers discriminatory under equal protection laws. As a practical matter, as long as the tradition of favoring the mother in matters of custody proves resistant to change, "equality" in terms of support obligations continues to mean that the obligation of most fathers is fulfilled by making a financial contribution, while most mothers fulfill their obligation by personally caring for the children.[15] This is due, in part, to resistance to changing tradition and stereotyping of parental roles. This asymmetry in the legal obligation to provide child support is also due to the fact that in most cases fathers earn higher salaries than mothers.

A court order for child support is generally three-pronged. First, the court looks at each parent's earning ability. Second, it considers the needs of the child; and third, it takes into account the standard of living to which the child has been accustomed.

Under the Child Support Enforcement Amendments of 1984 (Pub. L. No. 98-378), states were mandated to establish child support guidelines no later than October 1987 to assist local officials and judges in making these determinations. Since that time, Congress has passed the Family Support Act of 1988 (Pub. L. No. 100-485), which requires that states establish guidelines for child support awards and review the established guidelines every four years to ensure that the application of the law results in appropriate child support awards.

The fact that most courts look at earning ability does not always take into consideration factors such as actual income, other support obligations, or remarriage by either spouse. Child support obligations are not etched in stone and can be modified by the court when either party can demonstrate a significant change in circumstances has occurred. There are no clear definitions for what constitutes a significant change in circumstances; therefore much discretion is left to the judge on a case by case determination. It is important to understand that the child support obligation runs from parent to child. This obligation does not run between parents. As a result, not only may a mother initiate proceedings against a father delinquent in his payments, on behalf of the child, but the child has the right to proceed if his/her mother fails to do so.

When looking to adolescent fathers for support, the income of these young men must be realistically considered. The Battle study found that approximately 39 percent of the African-American adolescent fathers interviewed were unemployed; only one-fifth were working in a full time capacity. In addition, only 15.2 percent of the fathers were makin over $3000 per year.[16] In a study reported by Hendricks and Solomon, 34 percent of the African-American adolescent fathers interviewed felt that their problems were relate to unemployment, lack of money, or not being able to complete school.[17] African-American males over twenty years of age are about 88.6 percent as likely to be employed as White males over twenty years of age, while African-American teenagers are only about 51.1 percent as likely to be employed as White teenagers.[18]

Keeping these statistics in mind, it is apparent that many African-American adolescent fathers will be unable to adequately provide support for their children. Yet, th Family Support Act of 1988 provides no exemptions for adolescents, the poor, or th disabled. This legislation is applied to all fathers. It does, however, require states t establish guidelines for child support awards and includes a section requiring states t establish procedures, within two years of enactment, to allow review of individua support orders at the request of either parent or a child support enforcement agency

This section may provide an opportunity for fathers with little or no income to receive some realistic consideration under state established guidelines.

However, it is clear that states and courts are taking a firm stance in requiring fathers to provide support, as highlighted by the following cases. In a Massachusetts case decided prior to the implementation of the 1984 Amendments and the 1988 legislation, the Supreme Judicial Court upheld a lower court decision requiring a high school, adolescent father to pay child support for his out-of-wedlock child, although he was a recipient of AFDC benefits himself. The Court felt there was a strong public interest in immediately impressing a juvenile father with his obligations to his child and not waiting until he had reached majority to enforce his obligation.[19] In 1987, the U.S. Supreme Court held that a state had jurisdiction to find a totally disabled veteran, whose main source of income was federal veteran's benefits, in contempt for failing to pay child support.[20] These cases indicate the need for flexible guidelines that take into consideration the financial, physical, and mental condition of a father and his ability to pay child support orders.

In light of these efforts to hold fathers accountable for the support of their children, young fathers must be made aware that they are not an exception to the child support laws. The Family Support Act of 1988 will allow states to make wages of the absent parent subject to withholding whether or not the parent is in arrears. The only exceptions are where a parent can demonstrate there is no cause to withhold or where there is a written agreement between the parties providing an alternative arrangement. Close examination of these exceptions indicates that for the most part, only middle and upper income families would be in a position to come under the exceptions. This leaves the majority of African-American adolescent fathers unable to meet the requirements of the exceptions and therefore subject to mandatory withholding at the state's discretion.

A young father who acknowledges paternity or is judicially determined to be the father will have a heavy financial burden to bear for at least eighteen years, possibly longer if the child is disabled. Agencies that claim to provide services to young parents must not continue providing these services only to the mothers and their children. They must develop male components, preferably staffed with male role models, that provide specific services to young men and fathers.

Prior to fatherhood, the services should focus on prevention through education and information regarding consequences of behavior. If a young man becomes a father, he should be entitled to the same types of support services provided to mothers, such as health and mental health services, education, and employment training. The young father should be recognized and respected, not just for financial support, but for the psychological and emotional support he can provide to his child and in some cases, the child's mother.

## LEGAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It is appropriate for an adolescent father to claim rights to and control over his out-of-wedlock offspring. The highest court of this nation has dramatically defined and shaped the rights of unwed fathers over the past sixteen years. However, the U.S. Suprem Court has indicated that with these rights go responsibility, both financial and em tional. This type of involvement is critical to trigger the rights of an unwed fathe Rights may be limited or nonexistent unless the father has demonstrated his acceptan of his responsibility.

The most significant case granting rights to unwed fathers was decided in 1972 a took away from mothers the exclusive control of decisions regarding the adoption their children born out of wedlock.[21] In *Stanley*, the Court found unconstitutional a Illinois statute that prevented an unwed father, who had lived with the mother and h three children as a family for many years, from participating in custody proceedin regarding his children following their mother's death. The Court found that Mr. Stanl was entitled to due process, notice and a hearing, prior to having his children remov from his custody. This decision put the adoption system in a turmoil while state leg lators attempted to determine which procedures would comply with due process quirements and how far they were required to go in notifying absent fathers.

The Court, in a footnote to the decision, acknowledged that this due process requi ment may increase costs but felt that the increase would be minimal. The Court stat that some fathers would not care and would not appear despite notice, therefore neg ing the need for a hearing in every case. The Court also pointed out that for th fathers who cared and claimed competence to care for their children, the burden proving fatherhood fell on their shoulders.[22]

Following the confusion created by *Stanley*, the Court in 1978[23] denied an unmarr father strict veto power over the adoption of his child born out of wedlock. In that ca in an eleven-year period, the father had not legally acknowledged paternity, had o sporadically supported the child and had never lived as part of a family unit with child. In another case, an unwed father, who had been living with the mother and two children for five years, had contributed to their support and visited frequen following his separation from their mother, was allowed to prevent the adoption of children by the mother's new spouse.[24]

Finally in 1983, the Court made clear its interpretation of unwed fathers' rights. this case, the unwed father had rarely visited and had not supported his two-year- child. Claiming his due process rights had been violated because he had not recei notice or had an opportunity to be heard, he attempted to have the adoption of his c by the mother's husband invalidated.[25] The Court disagreed, saying:

> When an unwed father demonstrates a full commitment to the responsibilitie parenthood by 'com[ing] forward to participate in the rearing of his child,' *Ca* his interest in personal contact with his child acquires substantial protect under the due process clause. At that point it may be said that he 'act[s] as a fa toward his children.' But the mere existence of a biological link does not m equivalent constitutional protection. The actions of judges neither create sever genetic bonds. The significance of the biological connection is that it o the natural father an opportunity that no other male possesses to develop a

> tionship with his offspring. If he grasps that opportunity and accepts some measure of responsibility for the child's future, he may enjoy the blessings of the parent-child relationship and make uniquely valuable contributions to the child's development. If he fails to do so, the Federal Constitution will not automatically compel a state to listen to his opinion of where the child's best interests lie.[26]

Despite these clarifications by the Court, all of the questions have not been answered. The Court has not dealt with the case where the unwed father is not informed of pregnancy and is, therefore, unaware that a child has been born out of wedlock. In these situations, mothers may place the children for adoption immediately after birth, therefore denying the natural father the opportunity to acknowledge paternity or to have a relationship with his child. "Neither *Lehr* nor any of the earlier cases, articulates the interested and responsible unmarried father's rights immediately after the child's birth."[27]

However, in November, 1988, the U.S. Supreme Court heard arguments in a new case that again looked at the rights of unmarried fathers whose children are placed for adoption by their mothers. In *McNamara v. San Diego Department of Social Services*,[28] an unmarried father had not been in contact with the mother for eight months when their daughter was born in 1981. The father did not learn of the pregnancy and subsequent birth until the child was one month old, nor was he informed that the child had been placed in foster care to await adoption. The father immediately sought custody, which was denied when the child was four months old. The lower court determined that the child had bonded with the foster parents who wanted to proceed with her adoption. Therefore it held that the child's best interest was to stay with the foster parents. The lower court made this decision despite its finding that the father was "a good parent who can provide a good, loving home for this child."[29] In 1985, the father was stripped of his parental rights and his daughter was adopted. The father alleges that his rights were violated under the equal protection clause of the Constitution, "claiming that married fathers could not loose their parental rights unless they were found to have no interest or ability in parenting the child. And he noted that unwed mothers would not lose their parental rights under similar circumstances."[30] This case should be decided in 1989 and will clarify this very critical issue for unwed fathers.

Although these cases do not specifically state their application to adolescent fathers when referring to unwed fathers, it can be presumed that these decisions are equally applicable to all fathers, regardless of age. Historically, laws to protect children including adolescent fathers, have been based on assumptions that parents are responsible for their children and have primary control over them. Society is not willing to interfere with that control unless it is viewed as being in the best interest of the child. "[M]inors are assumed to exercise only limited judgment, they are accorded more protections and fewer liberties than adults."[31] However, the Court has held that "due process of laws is the primary and indispensable foundation of individual freedom."[32] Despite the fact that the Court limited its findings to this case, which involved the loss of liberty (incarceration), a strong argument can be made that the loss of rights to a biolog child without due process is also a compelling liberty interest.

The direction of the cited cases demonstrates that an unmarried adolescent fat will be required to make significant financial and emotional contributions to his ch in order to have any right to visitation, custody, or an opportunity to be heard potential adoption proceedings. This significant contribution may also provide young father with some legitimate authority to determine health care, education, day to day child rearing concerns pertinent to his child. A father will not automatic be entitled to involvement in and control over his child's life; he will have to earn benefit by legitimizing his child's existence and taking responsibility for the finan and emotional needs of the child.

## CONCLUSION

This article has attempted to provide information about pertinent legislation court decisions regarding the rights of unwed adolescent fathers. It is hoped that yo fathers and other young men, as potential fathers, will have a better understandin the responsibilities they will owe to a child for whom they have acknowledged pater or for whom paternity has been adjudicated.

The mere ability to conceive a child will not give these young men rights as fath They will need to demonstrate their competence and desire to contribute to the c emotionally and financially.

The information provided is particularly important to our young African-Amer men in understanding their role in the future of the African-American community. essential that the community develops improved preventative programs so that choice to have children is associated with an awareness of the inherent responsibil

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# An Epidemiological Perspective of Minority Teenage Males: A Preliminary Report

Neela P. Joshi

The demographics, sexual behavior, use of contraceptives, and fatherhood status of 150 minority males under the age of 19 years are described in this preliminary report of a two-year prospective longitudinal study. Nearly all of the subjects were from families of low socioeconomic status. More than half the subjects were living in a single parent household headed by the mother. Three groups of males were identified: Not sexually active (21 or 14 percent), sexually active nonfathers (107 or 71.3 percent) and fathers (22 or 14.6 percent). The majority of the subjects (86 percent) reported having had sexual experiences before the age of 15. Thirty-five of these youth were aware that the activity had resulted in at least one pregnancy.

Teenage pregnancy and parenting are major public health problems in the United States. In 1985, there were approximately 3.7 million births.[1] Of these, 12.7 percent or 477,705 were to women 19 years of age and under. This percentage has changed very little since 1976. In order to deal with this problem, many special programs to provide services to pregnant and parenting teenagers have been developed in the last twenty years. Many papers which examined factors responsible for and the consequences of teenage pregnancy and parenting have been published.[2]

What about the teenage father? Prevalence of teenage fatherhood is high even though accurate rates cannot be calculated due to reporting difficulties. For example, of the approximately 3.7 million births in 1985, 500,100 birth certificates had no information on the father.[3] This is largely due to the fact that mothers are unmarried and do not provide information regarding the father on the infant's birth certificate. In spite of this probable underreporting in 1985, 107,650 births (22 percent of all births to teenage mothers) involved fathers 19 years of age and under.[4]

The risk of becoming a father in adolescence is high for African-American and Hispanic males due to a high prevalence of sexual activity and a low use of contraceptives among these groups.[5] The number of births per 1,000 unmarried teenagers is more than six times greater among non-Whites than Whites. It has been suggested that successful pregnancy prevention programs for adolescents need to include males.[6]

However, despite the high prevalence of teenage fatherhood and the need, service providers have failed to include male partners in prevention programs.[7]

In a 1980 review, Earls and Siegel have noted that there is a paucity of research on teenage fatherhood.[8] It is believed that this is due to difficulties in capturing this population for observation which in turn leads to inadequacy of information for designing appropriate services. Since the Earls and Siegel review, considerable gains have been achieved in research regarding teenage fathers.[9]

The existing literature contains demographic information, data on attitudes toward sexuality and contraceptive behavior, and on educational/vocational and marital outcomes of teenage fathers.[10] In addition, emotional stress and difficulty surrounding adjustment to the pregnancy, and the degree to which the adolescent father fulfills the husband/father role in the first year or two of a child's life have been studied to some extent.[11]

Most of these studies are cross-sectional or retrospective. They identify the father through the pregnant teenager and information is obtained from him while he is in a crisis situation; that is, becoming a father. Very little information is available on the psychological, behavioral, and situational characteristics of minority adolescent males who are expectant fathers. There are also no observations regarding how changes in these characteristics over time affect sexual behavior and fatherhood status. It was, therefore, decided to observe a sample of inner city minority adolescent males over a period of time. The major objectives of this study were:

1. To identify three groups of males at the baseline interview: not sexually active, sexually active non-fathers, and fathers;
2. To obtain information on these three groups regarding situational, behavioral and psychological characteristics at the initial and follow-up interview;
3. To compare these three groups on situational, behavioral and psychological characteristics initially and at follow-up;
4. To observe change in fatherhood status over time; and
5. To ascertain whether there are many predictive associations between situational, behavioral and psychological characteristics and becoming a father during adolescence.

The design is a prospective, longitudinal study. Initial and follow-up observations were made on situational, behavioral, and psychological characteristics of 150 minority males age 19 years or under. The project site was an adolescent clinic in an urban municipal hospital which serves predominantly poor youth from surrounding neighborhoods. (The hospital's pay mix is: 40 percent Medicaid, 41 percent self-pay, 13 percent third party and 6 percent other.)

In this article, we report preliminary descriptive data on the demographics, sexual behavior, and use of contraceptives in the sample population at the time of initial interview.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### *Subjects*

Information regarding the project was widely disseminated to community agencies as well as the hospital personnel via group presentations and flyers. Posters displayed in well traveled areas provided salient project information with a telephone number for contact. In addition, a list of adolescent males attending the hospital-based Adolescent Center was prepared from the appointment log. A brief letter of project information was mailed to every adolescent male on this list. Flyers were also distributed in area schools. A youth volunteer assisted in distributing the flyers to adolescents at various youth meeting sites. Thus, a total of 600 adolescent males received brief project information—400 through letters, 150 through flyers and outreach, and 50 through direct contact when the adolescents had completed their clinic visit in the Adolescent Center.

As a result of these efforts, 150 English-speaking males were enrolled in the project over a three and a half month period. Informed consent was obtained from each participant and the parents of minors in accordance with Institutional Review Board Protocol. The initial interview with each participant was completed at the time of enrollment. Each participant was paid $10 for participation in the project.

### *Interviews*

The participants were interviewed in an office at the Adolescent Center. Answers to all questions in the interview-protocol were recorded by a trained interviewer who read each question slowly to the participant. The completion time for each interview was approximately 45 minutes.

The interview provided information on demographic factors, educational status, sexual behavior, and use of contraceptives. Fatherhood was ascertained during the interview. For participants who were fathers, additional questions were asked regarding the current relationship with the mother and child, the nature of child support, and the nature of family support received by the subject.

The results reported here are based on frequency analysis of the data on demographic factors, sexual behavior and contraceptive use.

## RESULTS

### *Demographic Characteristics*

*Age.* The majority of participants (84 percent) were 15 years of age or older. A breakdown for age by years and as a percentage of the total sample is shown in Table 1.

*Ethnicity.* Of the 150 respondents, 105 (70.4 percent) were African-American, 14 (9.3 percent) were Hispanic and 29 (19.3 percent) were racially mixed although they consid-

**TABLE 1**
**Number of Participants in Each Age Group With Percentage Distribution of the Total Sample**

| Age (years) | Number (participants) | Percent (total Sample) |
|---|---|---|
| 10 | 1 | 0.7 |
| 12 | 1 | 0.7 |
| 13 | 11 | 7.3 |
| 14 | 11 | 7.3 |
| 15 | 22 | 14.7 |
| 16 | 41 | 27.3 |
| 17 | 28 | 18.7 |
| 18 | 22 | 14.7 |
| 19 | 13 | 8.7 |
| Total | 150 | 100 |

ered themselves African-American. Information regarding ethnicity was missing from two participants.

*Marital Status:* Only 8 (5.3 percent) of the respondents were married at the time of the initial interview.

*Household Composition:* Just over one quarter of the sample—40 (26.7 percent)—reported the presence of both a father and a mother in the household. Seventy seven (51.3 percent) respondents stated that they were living with their mother who was a single parent and head of the household. In response to the question "When you were growing up, did you live with both your father and mother?" 105 (70 percent) of the subjects responded affirmatively. However, even when the father was present in the household while they were growing up, the majority of the respondents 94 (63.1 percent)—reported that they had a closer relationship with their mother than with other members of the household. Only 21 (14 percent) reported being closer to their father whereas 26 (17.3 percent) reported being close to neither parent.

*Religiosity:* In this report, religiosity is defined as having an active membership in church. Most of the respondents (78.7 percent) reported that they were not activ members of any church. Well over one-third (40 percent) indicated no religious prefer ence; 18 percent were Baptist; 18.7 percent were Roman Catholic; and the remainde were spread among other denominations.

*Sexual Behaviors and Use of Contraception*

Respondents were asked whether they ever had sexual intercourse. The majority (8 percent) responded in the affirmative. These 129 respondents were then asked a seri of questions regarding their age at first intercourse, current sexual activity, number partners, and experience with sexually transmitted diseases (STD). As can be seen fro Table 2, 90.6 percent of these sexually experienced participants had their first sexu encounter before the age of 15. Almost one-fourth of those who reported being sexual active stated that they had more than one partner. Sixteen percent (16 percent) report having had a sexually transmitted disease.

**TABLE 2**
**Age at First Intercourse, Current Sexual Activity, Number of Partners and History of Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) in 129 Respondents**

| | Number of Respondents | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| I. Age at first intercourse | | |
| under 15 years | 116 | 89.9 |
| 15 years or more | 12 | 9.3 |
| Do not remember | 1 | 0.8 |
| Total | 129 | 100 |
| II. Current sexual activity | | |
| Yes | 82 | 63.7 |
| No | 47 | 36.3 |
| Total | 129 | 100 |
| III. Number of sexual partners | | |
| One | 62 | 75.6 |
| More than one | 19 | 23.1 |
| No response | 1 | 1.3 |
| Total | 82 | 100 |
| IV. Ever had STD | | |
| Yes | 20 | 16.1 |
| No | 109 | 83.9 |
| Total | 129 | 100 |

Participants were also asked a series of questions regarding the use of contraception. Most (85 percent) reported having used a method of birth-control at some time. This percentage dropped drastically to 33.9 percent when the respondents were asked whether they used contraceptives all the time. Condoms and use of oral contraceptive pills by the partner were the most frequently used methods in this sample. It is interesting to note that almost a third declined to state their reason for not using a contraceptive. Almost 25 percent thought that contraceptives were not readily available, and only a small percentage (3 percent) stated that they wanted their partner to become pregnant (see Table 3.)

### *Pregnancy and Fatherhood Status*

Those 120 respondents who reported having had sexual experience were asked whether the activity had resulted in a pregnancy. There were a total of 45 pregnancies reported by the sample, with thirty-nine subjects (30.2 percent) reporting at least one. Of the total pregnancies, 23 (51.1 percent) resulted in a live-birth and 22 (48.9 percent) in abortions or miscarriages. The number of respondents reporting a pregnancy and the outcome are shown in Table 4.

## SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

This is a preliminary report regarding some demographic characteristics, sexual behavior and fatherhood status of 150 minority males under the age of 19 years from

TABLE 3
Use of Contraceptives and Pattern of Use in 129 Respondents

| | Number of Respondents | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Ever used Birth-Control | | |
| Yes | 110 | 85.3 |
| No | 19 | 14.7 |
| | 129 | 100 |
| 2. Always used | | |
| Yes | 40 | 33.9 |
| No | 70 | 66.1 |
| | 110 | 100 |
| 3. Used first time | | |
| Yes | 40 | 33.9 |
| No | 70 | 66.1 |
| | 110 | 100 |
| 4. Used last time | | |
| Yes | 77 | 70.0 |
| No | 33 | 30.0 |
| | 110 | 100 |
| 5. Commonly used methods | | |
| Condom: | | |
| Yes | 102 | 92.7 |
| No | 8 | 7.3 |
| | 110 | 100 |
| Oral Contraceptive Pill: | | |
| Yes | 65 | 59.1 |
| No | 45 | 40.9 |
| | 110 | 100 |

TABLE 4
Fatherhood Status of Respondents Reporting Pregnancy and Live Births
(Analysis of 129 respondents who reported ever having had sexual experience)

| I. Ever gotten anyone pregnant? | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 39 | 30.2 |
| No | 90 | 69.8 |
| | 129 | 100 |
| II. Total Number of Pregnancies reported | 39 | 45 |
| III. Outcome or 45 pregnancies | | |
| Live birth | 23 | 51.1* |
| Abortion and Miscarriage | 22 | 48.9 |
| Total | 45 | 100 |

* Of 129 sexually experienced males, 17% reported being a father (having a live birth).

urban, low-income neighborhoods. The study population suffers from inherent selection bias, in addition to an overrepresentation from urban, minority, and low-income groups. As such, it is generalizable only to urban, minority, low-income populations. This is because the study reflects only those minority teenagers who agreed to be interviewed. Of the 600 adolescent males who received brief project information, the first 150 (25 percent) who chose to get detailed information regarding the project and agreed to be interviewed were recruited in the project. Even though the remainder were similar in age, ethnicity and socioeconomic status, there is no further information on them.

The preliminary findings support the existing evidence that more than half (51.3 percent) of the teenagers from poor urban neighborhoods live in a single parent household headed by a female. Most reported being close to their mothers while growing up. Many (78.7 percent) were not active members of any church. The majority of these males (90.6 percent) reported engaging in sexual activity before they were 15 years of age. Of those who were sexually active, a substantial number (25 percent) have more than one sexual partner and only a third (33.9 percent) reported using contraceptives all the time. Further, 30.2 percent reported being aware of their partner becoming pregnant. Approximately half (51 percent) of these pregnancies resulted in live births. This means that 17 percent of the sexually experienced teenage males became fathers.

Further analysis will include self-esteem, ego development, school/job status, and the future outlook of the three groups of respondents. Comparisons will be made among the three groups at the initial and follow-up interviews to assess changes in fatherhood status as well as on these characteristics.

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# Family Planning and the Young Minority Male: A Pilot Project

Leanor Boulin Johnson and Robert E. Staples

This article is a report of the first coordinated program of its kind aimed at young African-American, Spanish speaking, Asian and American Indian males in relation to family life education, family planning and parental concerns. The project sought to develop an approach to the promotion of sexual responsibility and the reduction of repetition of unwanted, out-of-wedlock pregnancy through goal-directed support and assistance to unwed fathers and potential unwed fathers, 14 to 24 years of age.

Because family support systems of minorities are severely handicapped by the effects of poverty and discrimination, the consequences of combining parenthood with adolescence are compounded for the minority parent. Yet, little is known about the psychosocial development of minority youth with respect to their sexuality, the resulting problems that emerge when out-of-wedlock pregnancy occurs, and minority youth's relationships to family planning agencies. This knowledge is virtually nonexistent for minority males. While many agencies operating in minority communities deliver counseling and family planning services to the unwed mother,[1] the father is usually involved only superficially or punitively—when efforts are made to establish legal paternity as a means for assessing financial responsibility.[2]

This omission, however, is not unique for minority males. The present sexist value system robs the term "fatherhood" of the richness of connotative meaning elicited by that ascribed to "motherhood." A father is a person who provides financial security. This narrow definition obscures his potential contribution to the psychological well-being of the mother and child and has led social agencies to generally ignore the adolescent father, who is frequently without financial resources.[3] It is, perhaps, this single fact of inadequate economic provision which has resulted in the social agency's premature conclusion that unwed fathers are unwilling to contribute to the future of their child and the support of the mother.

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This sexist assumption is extended further by the traditional double standard which holds that, although it was the boy's fault for getting the girl pregnant, she failed to exercise the negative control expected of females. Hence, he is not really responsible. Frequently, the girl's parents forbid the boy to see their pregnant daughter. His absence is interpreted as an uncaring attitude and, again, he is ignored or treated punitively.[4] This situation is further compounded when minority males, particularly African-Americans, are involved. Sociological theory purports that slavery broke the African-American man's sense of family responsibility.[5] Thus, it is assumed that African-American women do not expect or demand that their African-American men support them.

Recent evidence suggests that the matrifocality of present theory and social services is myopic. Although a popular belief is that informal adoptions result primarily from irresponsible males, there are numerous case studies which describe situations where children born out-of-wedlock are informally adopted by the father or his relatives.[6] A study conducted at Los Angeles Vista Del Mar Child-Care Service, and another at the juvenile division of the Philadelphia County Court, demonstrated that most unwed fathers are willing to face their feelings and responsibilities.[7] Although Misra's study of lower income African-American males focused upon those who were married, his findings suggest that unmarried males do not consider family planning a domain of the female, but rather a joint responsibility to be shared by both partners.[8] In Johnson's 1978 survey of 313 southern African-American college students, a large majority of both males and females disagreed that contraception was entirely the sexually active unmarried female's responsibility.[9] Furthermore, the frequency of disagreement was higher for males than for females (71.5% and 65.4%, respectively). A survey of 421 male high school African-Americans, White and Hispanic students revealed that despite the fact that a slight majority responded that birth control was the female's responsibility, the same percentage believed that a male respects his partner when he uses a condom.[10] When it is realized that the fertility decline in the Western world has largely resulted from male methods of family planning, and that the leading form of contraceptives, especially among teenagers, are methods which involve male initiative, the need to focus attention upon males is evident and urgent.[11] However, when minority males are the target, the task is more difficult.

## A CULTURALLY RELEVANT APPROACH

Race and cultural practices are two significant factors which influence the perception of sex roles and sexuality. Any family planning program which ignores either the history of majority-minority relations or cultural norms is headed for difficulty.

Most Anglo-oriented social agencies are uneasy and unfamiliar with the appropriate ways of approaching the inner-city male. The chasm in cultural understanding between poor minorities and Anglo health practitioners has resulted in what social workers and ethnic spokespersons define as the "failure to reach" minority clientele. Past discrimination and the trend toward militancy and racial polarization further intensify this discomfort.[12]

Government agencies' violation of cultural beliefs and norms, as well as public actions which threaten the minorities' right to exist, only serve to make public family clinics suspect.[13] For instance, there is sufficient evidence supporting a relationship between fears of racial genocide and family planning practices. The fear of genocide among Indians is understandable given their particular history and present population size. This same attitude is present among African-Americans and Asian-Americans. One study indicates that among African-Americans, those most expressive of genocide fear were males, subjects under age twenty-eight, and those who were not high school graduates. Over half of these young African-American males agreed that birth control programs are a plot to eliminate African-Americans, and 39 percent of the entire sample were in agreement with them. However, these same data indicated that, regardless of gender, age, education, or region, the majority wanted family planning clinics if they were controlled by African-Americans.[14]

Genocide fear is also evident in the Chinese community. The San Francisco Chinatown Planned Parenthood Clinic is the biggest and one of the most successful minority programs operating today. Yet, because a significant number of people felt that it was a government plot to control them and/or felt its services had strings attached, the initial attempt completely failed. It was only after involving the people through a series of seminars, educational classes, etc., that the clinic reopened with great success.[15]

It is important to note that the notion of birth control as genocide does not capture the full complexity of needed cultural considerations. While the European-based family systems focus upon contrarity, polarity and primacy of individualism, minority families tend to be communistic, expressive, spiritual, and particularistic.[16] A number of examples elucidate this point.

The Chinatown population is characterized by an unusually persistent social isolation. Thus, language is not the only major concern.[17] It is essential that a family planning program recognize the influence of old world norms and institutions, particularly the close affinity between Confucian philosophy and family formation. The status of men and women is distinct, and the indelible line of family authority remains intact throughout life. Parents expect unquestionable obedience regardless of their child's age.[18] Thus, in order to both serve the Chinese male and preserve the family as the citadel of the Chinese community, family planning programs must open up communication among family members and work with their conservative sexual attitudes (e.g., privacy of sex and propagation as the sole function of coitus).

In both the African-American and Latino (particularly Latino, the most recent immigrants) communities, it is important to recognize the impact of significant others. These two groups are known to have strong consanguine and fictive kinship ties which serve as emotional, psychological, and financial support systems. The rights and obligations of nonconsanguine *compadrazgo* (godparents) are similar to those of any blood relative and are highly valued in the Mexican-American community.[19] Similarly, within the African-American population, the "play" aunt or uncle is often the source of unlimited support. When such fictive relationships exist, a relevant delivery service will seek to effectively utilize them.[20]

Similarly, delivery services to Indian males will not be effectively met unless recognition is given to their pattern of etiquette (e.g., the value of non-interference in the affairs of others), their adherence to the ethic of mutual aid to kin, and their religious orientation (e.g., oneness with nature, and community identity and participation).[21]

The role of the male virility cult and family planning in the Chicano and African-American community is still another illustration. Within these cultures there is evidence that a link exists between the ability to have sexual relations with women, the subsequent birth of children, and the self-image of the male. The Spanish-speaking groups have coined the word *machismo* (which literally means that the ability to have children defines the status of a man in his society) to refer to this concept of masculinity. For the Chicano this notion is often intertwined with the anticontraceptive teachings of Catholicism as well as with the traditional patriarchy. If these males are convinced that contraceptives will detract from their masculinity, they may be reluctant to use them.

## THE YOUNG INNER-CITY MALES PROJECT

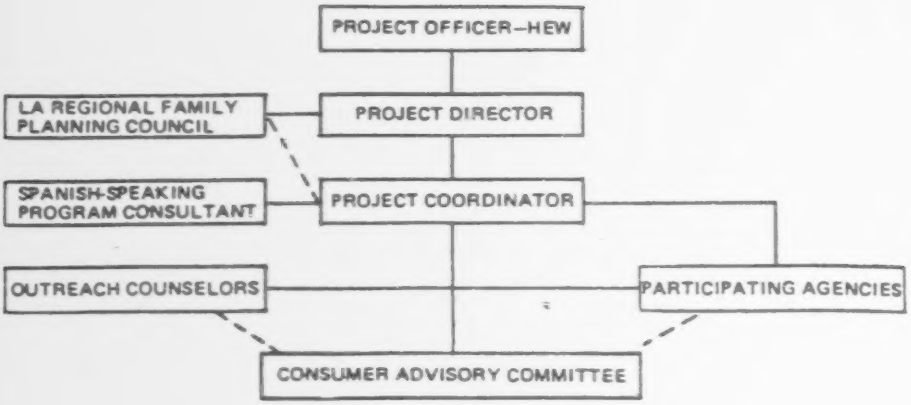
Recognizing the immediate need and the complex nature of determining a delivery system for inner-city minority males, the Los Angeles Young Inner-City Males Project has begun to develop the first coordinated program designed to provide culturally oriented family life planning and educational services to African-Americans, Chicanos, Asians, and Indians living in urban poverty pockets.

Funded by a DHEW contract, the Young Males Pilot Project was implemented in 1974 by Naomi Gray Associates (NGA), a minority owned and directed family planning, social welfare, and health consultant firm. In order to enlist the cooperation of agencies in the 4,000 square miles of geographic area to be served, the NGA worked in cooperation with the Los Angeles Regional Family Planning Council (LARFPC).[22] This council is unique in that it coordinates the programs of all family agencies, including those serving ethnic populations. Its grantsmanship and vision have provided money to establish new clinics and "grass-roots" participation in its program planning.[23]

The organization of the Young Males Project is presented in Figure 1. The project staff consists of Naomi Gray as project director, a project coordinator who is a former statistical analyst of LARFPC, a part-time, Spanish-speaking consultant who works three days a week, four outreach counselors who are paid for only ten hours a week (all work overtime because of enthusiasm and commitment), and six peer group counselors. The outreach and peer group counselors represent each of the four target ethnic populations—African-American, Chicano, Asian, and Indian. The outreach counselors were selected from a large pool of applicants and have proven to reflect the cultural concerns of their respective communities. The peer group workers were hired to aid young fathers in working out their own solutions to emotional problems, attitudinal relationships with the mother of their child, their identification as fathers, vocational and educational goals, and legal problems and responsibilities.

With the exception of the Asian-American community (Chinatown), each ethnic community has a peer outreach counselor who works within the community and with

FIGURE 1


PROJECT OFFICER–HEW
LA REGIONAL FAMILY PLANNING COUNCIL
PROJECT DIRECTOR
SPANISH-SPEAKING PROGRAM CONSULTANT
PROJECT COORDINATOR
OUTREACH COUNSELORS
PARTICIPATING AGENCIES
CONSUMER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Organizational chart of the Young Male Project.

the participating delegate agency. The LARFPC provides the counselors with office space and telephones. For each agency there is a liaison person who is assigned to work with the counselor and the Young Males Project.

A 21-member (ages from 13-21) Consumer Advisory Committee consisting of members from each of the ethnic areas was organized and successfully worked with the staff in: (a) evaluating the relevance of educational and promotional materials for teenage populations (e.g., sex education films were evaluated and rated, and groundwork was established for rewriting existing material at the reading level of the target group); (b) giving feedback information on program effectiveness; (c) suggesting exploratory areas for the project; and (d) serving as a sounding board on issues affecting the program.

A one-day training session entitled "The Role of the Minority Male in Traditional and Contemporary Family Life" was designed to outline program goals for the personnel of cooperating agencies and the project staff. This session was held in late September of 1974 in the LARFPC office; approximately 25 persons attended. The project staff met monthly to address new training needs and to insure the project's optimal responsiveness to the needs of the target populations.[24] In addition, a resident physician and a lawyer were invited to instruct the youth counselors in the medical and legal issues of teenage parenting.[25]

In order to sensitize the young males to their sexual and parental responsibilities and to meet their needs in coping with their environment, it was realized that efforts were needed to allay community suspicion about the nature and purpose of the project. Thus, the cornerstones of the program were the peer group and outreach counselors.

TABLE 1
The Number of Contacts Interviewed
by Age, Ethnic Group and Marital Status

| | Total | Group 1<br>Age 12–14 | Group 2<br>Age 15–17 | Group 3<br>Age 18–20 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total Number of Respondents | 118 | 21 | 53 | 44 |
| African-Americans | 39 | 6 | 20 | 13 |
| Chicanos | 35 | 3 | 19 | 13 |
| Asians | 44 | 12 | 14 | 18 |
| Total Number Married | 14 | 0 | 5 | 9 |
| African-Americans | 3 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Chicanos | 3 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| Asians | 8 | 0 | 4 | 4 |

### *Outreach Counselors and Their Activities (Implementation Phase)*

The counselors began their 10-hour-a-week contact with the community after 16 hours of formal basic training.[26] Their primary duties were to determine the most practical and innovative means of attracting males to established clinics and to make suggestions to the staff for noninstitutional delivery services. Through contacts in the street, pool halls, basketball games, recreational centers, parties, and homes for boys, the counselors have been able to gain the confidence of their respective target groups. In addition, an enthusiastic working relationship was established with several of the local high schools, youth groups, and organizations.

Within three months the staff made contacts with 437 young individuals, 83 adults/parents, and 73 agencies; conducted sessions with 47 groups (total attendance of 401); and made 6 referrals. Within 12 months approximately 1,000 sexually active young males were reached through face-to-face contacts, with at least 40-50 percent being involved in the ongoing program and 200 receiving intensive consultation and other services.

The counselors' most significant contribution rested with their success in opening up communication among males so that information and feelings concerning family planning, sexual activities, father's rights, relationships with females, and attitudes about condom use were freely discussed. The counselors learned that these males expressed annoyance with the prying and intrusiveness of existing family planning agencies.[27] As a result of this irritation, they used agencies only in a crisis situation. Systematic information on the males' general sexual knowledge, attitudes, and practices was gathered by a preliminary (i.e., utilized for a 60-day trial period) one-page reporting form. With the exception of the Indian counselor, who joined the staff much later, the counselors returned 118 completed forms (see Table 1). In general, most of the males were misinformed, ignorant about venereal disease detection and treatment, and unfamiliar with the wide variety of contraceptive methods (some had never seen a condom). While there were no significant statistical differences between the responses of the three ethnic groups, differential responses were evident by age group.

**TABLE 2**
**Knowledge and Attitudes**
**Toward Birth Control by Age Groups**

| | Age Group | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 12–14 | | 15–17 | | 18–20 | |
| | % | (N) | % | (N) | % | (N) |
| *Has Knowledge About Birth Control* | | | | | | |
| Yes | 5 | (1) | 21 | (11) | 60 | (26) |
| A Little | 5 | (1) | 35 | (18) | 20 | (9) |
| No | 19 | (90) | 44 | (23) | 20 | (9) |
| *Attitudes Toward Birth Control* | | | | | | |
| Positive | 35 | (7) | 45 | (23) | 39 | (39) |
| Negative | 0 | (0) | 4 | (2) | 0 | (0) |
| No Thoughts | 65 | (13) | 39 | (20) | 37 | (16) |
| Not His Problem | 0 | (0) | 12 | (6) | 23 | (10) |
| *Uses Condoms* | | | | | | |
| Yes | 0 | (0) | 24 | (12) | 36 | (15) |
| No | 100 | (16) | 76 | (38) | 64 | (27) |
| *Would Like to Know More About Birth Control* | | | | | | |
| Yes | 85 | (18) | 73.5 | (39) | 41.6 | (18) |
| No | 5 | (1) | 16.9 | (9) | 52.4 | (23) |
| No Opinion | 10 | (2) | 7.5 | (4) | 5.5 | (2) |
| Knows Enough | 0 | (0) | 1.8 | (1) | 2.4 | (1) |

Of those who confined their sexual partners to one woman, 76 percent were 12-14 year olds, 26 percent were age 15-17, and 30 percent were 18-20 year olds. The data suggest that education about venereal disease was most relevant to the older teenager who had two or more sexual partners. Data about the males' knowledge and attitudes toward contraceptives are presented in Table 2. Twenty-four percent of the males under fifteen years of age were uninformed and none had ever used a condom. Seventy-nine percent of those aged 15-17 and 40 percent of those aged 18-20 had little or no birth control knowledge, and 76 percent and 64 percent respectively reported not using the condom. Those respondents who used the withdrawal or rhythm method or douching were coded as having little or no knowledge.

It is evident that, while the majority of those under 18 years of age held neutral or positive attitudes toward family planning and expressed a desire to learn more about birth control, only a minority of older males expressed interest in further knowledge. In fact, the older the age group, the more likely they were to feel that birth control was their partner's problem.

Not a single male in the 12-14 age group felt his partner knew about birth control methods. Thus, the partner's awareness appears to be equivalent to the males' own inadequate knowledge. Since a higher percentage of the older age groups was married, it is not surprising that a greater number of them were aware of their partner's birth control knowledge and method.

Table 3 shows that few in any age group were aware of the increased risk of teenage pregnancy. Yet, there was an almost unanimous wish not to impregnate their partner.

**TABLE 3**
**Attitudes Toward Teenage Pregnancy**

| | Age Group | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 12–14 | | 15–17 | | 18–20 | |
| | % | (N) | % | (N) | % | (N) |
| *Attitudes Toward Getting Girl Pregnant* | | | | | | |
| In Favor | 0 | (0) | 0 | (0) | 2 | (1) |
| Against | 100 | (100) | 98 | (51) | 89 | (40) |
| Don't Care | 0 | (0) | 2 | (1) | 7 | (3) |
| In Favor of Child Later | 0 | (0) | 0 | (0) | 2 | (1) |
| *Knowledge of Increased Risk of Teenage Pregnancy* | | | | | | |
| Is Aware | 10 | (2) | 14 | (7) | 17 | (7) |
| Is Not Aware | 90 | (19) | 86 | (45) | 83 | (36) |

Perhaps that wish results from their belief that they and others their age are too young for parenthood. However, wishes and existing realities are in conflict. The males' lack of knowledge is compounded by the slow and often negative response of existing agencies and health care providers. In fear of community reaction, many pharmacists will not even put up condom displays.[28] In view of low reading levels, instructions on boxes of condoms are of little use. Thus, in an effort to improve the rapport between health care delivery units and males, the counselors encouraged drug store clerks to explain the proper use of condoms. In addition, LARFPC supplied contraceptive kits for demonstration and a supply of condoms for distribution.

In sum, these counselors' practical training and intimate knowledge of the culture made them valuable resource persons not only for the young client, but also for his significant others who are more entrenched in traditional institutions.[29] After the project was re-funded for another two years, a smaller scale Teens Incentive Project (TIPS) was established in the Watts area of Los Angeles. However, the limited funding resulted in services being scaled down considerably. Due to the lack of follow-through by the federal government and local schools, many of the project's suggestions and plans have not been implemented. This project did stimulate more interest in the unmarried young male's responsibility in contraceptive use and his role as a father; in addition, the San Jose Health Department received funds for a male's outreach program in family planning, and the Chinatown Clinic in Los Angeles was established. Other projects sprang up in various cities in the United States (e.g., the Chicano project in Denver, Colorado), although few focused on the minority male population. Thus, the situation still exists where unmarried parenthood continues to be the responsibility of women and the special needs of minorities are not being served.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

This pilot project has demostrated that, until the young minority male is more directly involved in decisions about sex and parenthood, we will continue to experience an increasing number of out-of-wedlock pregnancies. While most of the attention has been focused on teenage girls, it is often the young male who determines whether he or his sexual partner will use a birth control method.[30] Hence, it is incumbent upon us to provide information and services to both male and female adolescents. Although the logical source of sex education should be the parents, there is little indication that many parents are willing or able to fulfill that role.

Hence, other institutions will have to carry out this function. Public schools, in particular, should provide sound sexual education as early as age 12 to young, minority males. A teaching and training curriculum for family life, family planning, and sex education materials (both written and visual) should be introduced into the junior high and high school curriculum. Such a curriculum should include instruction on the meanings of parenthood and value clarification in relation to the minority male's culture, as well as the technicalities of contraceptive use. The curriculum should not be just a narrow "pelvic-centered" one but provide the positive concepts of the minority male's image, history, and cultural variations.

The same range of services provided the young female population should be made available to young minority males. Since they will have unique needs, we suggest that clinics be based in the minority communities and under community control. We would like to see these clinics specifically designed to serve the young minority male population and manned by properly trained teens who would act as counselors, interviewers, etc. In this way they would achieve greater success in meeting their objectives. A health department, hospital, or family planning center could set aside one morning during nonschool hours for teens who would feel more comfortable accepting services under these circumstances. Given the existence of special clinics for young minority males, their special concerns, fears, and needs should be addressed. Sensitivity to their need for anonymity and privacy should have primacy. Thus, confidentiality and privacy can help assure their continued use of the clinic services.

On the legislative front, young people under eighteen still encounter considerable difficulty in obtaining contraceptive services without parental consent in some states—it is particularly difficult for minorities to obtain this service. Given the high rate of teenage pregnancy, condoms should be as readily available as other merchandise in a drug store. Too often the young male is embarassed to go through the procedure of requesting condoms from a pharmacist. A counter display of condoms could obviate this awkward process for many young men. For young males who have fathered an out-of-wedlock child, discriminatory laws related to custody, visitation rights and adoption should be mitigated. Basically, American laws do not recognize the parental rights of the unwed father except for financial support. In most states the unwed father's parental rights can be terminated without his consent. If we want to encourage greater participation in child rearing by the young unwed father, it is essential that he be permitted more parental rights than are now allowed by law.

We cannot overlook the link between economic opportunities and the young minority male's attitudes toward and enactment of the father role. At this point in time there is little realistic basis for hope of young minority males taking a more active and responsible role in child bearing and rearing until their employment prospects improve.

Due to an unemployment rate that remains around 40 percent, limited education, and continued racial discrimination in employment practices, the chances of a young minority male obtaining a steady job to support the mother and their child are restricted. Moreover, young minority males who do not have access to conventional expressions of masculinity, such as the ability to sustain themselves and their families through meaningful employment, will often express it through sexual activity, the result of which may be a child they cannot support.[31]

## NOTES

This project was supported by Health Services Administration, Bureau of Community Health Services, Dept. of H.E.W. Contract HSA 105-74-201.

1. Although the existing agencies are female oriented, only half of sexually experienced teenage females are believed to have access to a clinic or physician. Cited in R. Slovenko, "Financing Abortion: Ploys Revisited." *SIECUS Report* 6 (1978): 4.

2. Naomi Gray Associates. *To Conduct a Program on Sexual and Parental Responsibilities in Family Life and Family Planning: A Multi-Service Project for Young Inner-City Males*, Progress Report. (Los Angeles: Naomi Gray Associates, 1974).

3. R.D. Parke and D.B. Sawin, "Fathering: It's a Major Role," *Psychology Today* 10 (1977): 108-109, 111-112.

4. L. Connolly, "Boy Fathers," *Human Behavior* 7 (1978): 40-43, 45.

5. D.P. Moynihan, *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action*. Office of Policy Planning and Research, United States Department of Labor, 1965.

6. R. Hill, and L. Shackleford. "The Black Extended Family Revisted," *The Urban League Review* 1 (2) (1975): 18-24; and C. Stack, *All Our Kin: Strategies for Survival in a Black Community* (New York: Harper, 1974).

7. Connolly, "Boy Fathers."

8. B.D. Misra, "Correlates of Males' Attitudes Toward Family Planning." In D. J. Bogue (Ed.), *Sociological Contributions to Family Planning Research* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), 161-167

9. L. B. Johnson, Unpublished research at Florida State University, 1978.

10. M. Finkel, and D. Finkel, "Sexual and Contraceptive Knowledge, Attitudes and Behavior of Male Adolescents," *Family Planning Perspectives* 7 (1974): 256-260.

11. J. E. Lieberman, "Specialist Tells Experts Educate Boys Sexually," *Tallahassee Democrat*, November 6, 1977; and D.J. Bogue. *Sociological Contributions to Family Planning Research*.

12. Naomi Gray Associates, *To Conduct a Program*.

13. L. B. Johnson, The Sexual Oppression of Blacks. In H. Gochross and J. Gochross (Eds.), *The Sexually Oppressed* (New York: Association Press, 1977); and L. C. Landman, "Los Angeles Experiment with Functional Coordination: A Progress Report." *Family Planning Perspectives* 3, (1971): 5-14.

14. W. Darity, and C. Turner, "Family Planning, Race Consciousness and the Fear of Race Genocide," *American Journal of Public Health* 62 (1972): 1454-1459; and C. Turner, & W. Darity, "Fears of Genocide Among Black Americans as Related to Age, Sex and Religion," *American Journal of Public Health* 63 (1973): 1029-1034.

15. Naomi Gray Associates, *To Conduct a Program*.

16. W. Nobles, "Africanity: Its Role in Black Families," *The Black Scholar* 9 (1974): 10-17; and C.A. Hernandez, M.J. Haug, & N.W. Wagner, *Chicanos: Social and Psychological Perspectives* (St. Louis: Mosby, 1976).

17. S.M. Lyman, "Contrasts in the Community Organization of Chinese and Japanese in North America." In N.R. Yetman and C. H. Steele (Eds.) *Majority and Minority* (2nd ed.). (Boston: Allyn, Bacon, 1975).

18. S. Sue, and N.N. Wagner, *Asian-Americans: Psychological Perspectives* (Berkeley, CA: Science and Behavior Books, 1973).

19. Recent data show that *compadrazgo* is viable, but the frequent casual use of the term "compadre" among Mexican-Americans perhaps makes the relationship more conspicuous than is warranted (see below: Grebler, Moore, and Guzman).

20. L. Grebler, J.W. Moore, and R.C. Guzman, *The Mexican-American People*. (New York: Free Press, 1970); Hernandez, et al. *Chicanos*; and W. Nobles, "Africanity: Its Role in Black Families."

21. C.H. Steele, "The Acculturation/Assimilation Model in Urban Indian Studies: A Critique." In N.R. Yetman and C.H. Steele (Eds.), *Majority and Minority*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Allyn, Bacon, 1975); and M. Wax, and R. Wax, "Federal Programs and Indian Target Populations." In N.R. Yetman and C.H. Steele (Eds.), *Majority and Minority*. (Boston: Allyn, Bacon, 1971).

22. In 1968 the LARFPC, a nonprofit corporation of eleven public and private health agencies, hospitals and social agencies, received $448,000 (the largest grant to a family planning project) from the Office of Economic Opportunity

to establish a coordinating agency for the delivery of family planning services to poor people within Los Angeles County. Since then the delegate agencies have doubled, clients have steadily increased, and the funding has increased tenfold (for further background on LARFPC see Landman, 1971). Participating agencies of LARFPC included the Allso-Pico Family Planning Clinic; American Indian Free Clinic, Inc., Compton; Elias Chico Family Health Center, La Clinica Familia del Barrio; Martin Luther King, Jr. General Hospital Family Planning Program; Westland Health Services, Inc.; and White Memorial Center, Family Planning Program. Also cooperating was ANC Mothers Anonymous, Watts.

23. The LARFPC contains a 50-member council of family planning consumers who represent various ethnic, geographic, and educational backgrounds, have received subsidized family clinic services and show continued interest in the council.

24. On February 26-28, 1975, the Indian group found it necessary to conduct a National Family Planning Forum for Indians in Phoenix, Arizona. The central aim of the conference was family planning enrichment and the exchange of the unique concepts and purposes of each of three tribes—Sioux, Navajo, and Chippewa.

25. Naomi Gray Associates, *To Conduct a Program.*

26. Carol Smith, a sex educator and nurse/midwife and a member of the obstetrics and gynecology department of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Hospital, assumed primary responsibility for training the staff in human sexuality, counseling, rap sessions, human reproduction, and birth control methods. Limited time and money resulted in a no-frill training program.

27. These feelings have support elsewhere. In a study of forty clinics in eight major U.S. cities it was found that violation of confidentiality or "fear of parents finding out" was the primary reason teenagers cited for not using clinics (Slovenko, 1978).

28. "Open Display of Condoms Results in Increased Sales," *Family Planning Perspectives* 8 (1976): 134.

29. Naomi Gray Associates, *To Conduct a Program.*

30. Bogue, *Sociological Contributions to Family Planning,*; and Lieberman, "Specialist Tells Experts."

31. There is a need for basic research studies on the young minority male's sexuality. While a few studies and articles exist about the sexual attitudes and practices of young black males, there is very little information on Latino, Asian and Indian males. We need to know what cultural values, if any, are connected to their sexual practices and how effective family planning programs can be constructed which will be compatible with their cultural values. Research might provide the answer as to whether their sexuality is linked to cultural values or is a function of poverty and poor education. No matter what our efforts may produce, we should continue to stress that fatherhood is a role that embraces a variety of support functions that exist beyond the act of conception.

# THE PLIGHT OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN MEN IN URBAN AMERICA

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TUESDAY, MAY 21, 1991

U.S. Senate,
Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs,
*Washington, DC.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:07 a.m., in room SD-538, Senate Dirksen Office Building, Senator Donald W. Riegle, Jr. (chairman of the committee) presiding.

## OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN RIEGLE

The Chairman. The committee will come to order.

Let me welcome everyone in attendance this morning. This is the second hearing that we have had on the topic under discussion which I'll be describing in just a moment. I want to particularly welcome our very distinguished panelists today who have come to speak to us and to bring their ideas and their thinking to us.

I will introduce them individually at the conclusion of my remarks before yielding to my colleagues.

This morning, the committee is meeting to address the issues surrounding the extraordinarily difficult circumstances facing African-American men in our Nation's cities. The problems in the urban setting are worse than they are in other parts of the country, but it is a pervasive problem throughout the country.

These problems are of profound concern to our Nation in human terms and in ethical and equity terms, and in terms of our economic future.

So today, we are going to be focusing on recommendations and proposed solutions to respond to the problems that are blocking the progress of young Black men into mainstream American society.

I want to acknowledge the very important leadership that has been given by the 21st Century Commission on African-American Males. And I want to acknowledge in that context the significant leadership of Senator Sanford of North Carolina who, as a member of this committee, has worked very hard to help move this issue forward and directly into the center of our consideration and into the center of national consciousness.

I want to just cite at the outset some statistics that we're having to try to understand and to turn around. Our witnesses today will help us begin to grasp the meaning of this and what we do to change it.

Today, in our society, Black men have the lowest life expectancy of any group in our society, any racial or gender group. The death rate for Black men at all age levels is higher than for any other racial or gender group.

Unemployment rates among Black men are twice as high as among White men. Black male college graduates have a lower employment rate than at any time in our Nation's history. The earnings gap between Black and White males, regardless of the level of qualification, in terms of formal training and education, advanced degrees, has been widening.

And in fact, not perhaps surprisingly given that statistic, college enrollment of Black men is falling sharply throughout our country.

There are a host of other statistics that can be cited. But these trend lines mark an epic tragedy in terms of what's happening in the lives of individuals and family members connected to those individuals, and the tremendous loss of potential to this country.

And it can't be allowed to continue.

We have an economic plan today in America for every country around the world but the United States. We're helping every other nation today, whether it's in the Persian Gulf or when we talk about a United States-Mexican trade agreement to help in that part of the world. We're helping the Soviets. We're helping the Chinese. We help everybody under the Sun, but we can't seem to be able to respond with a program to help our own people right here in the U.S.A.

We can't as a Nation spend all of our time on foreign policy and almost no time on domestic policy when problems like this are going on in our society. And there's an urgent need to deal with it.

America cannot begin to achieve its full potential until these issues are faced directly and specific steps are taken to change these trend lines and to respond to this problem directly.

And so getting this issue up on the radar screen as a matter of acute national importance is something that just has to be done. I feel very strongly about it as the chairman of this committee and I intend to see us press ahead in this area and to make formal recommendations, to receive formal recommendations and, in turn, make judgments as a committee and to press these issues forward.

I want to say today that—I want to just take a minute and indicate who we have testifying today because this is a distinguished array of leadership that we need to hear from.

We will be hearing first from Clifford Alexander, who is the former Secretary of the Army for the Carter administration, former Chairman of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and Special Consultant to President Johnson on Civil Rights.

He's been an important national leader for certainly the 25 years that I've served in the Congress, and as I was saying to him on the way in, I remember Clifford Alexander when neither of us had any gray hair.

So it's been a long time. [Laughter.]

But I'm delighted that he is here.

Next, we will be hearing from Blair Underwood, who will be known by many as an outstanding television actor and a person in the performing arts. He will be a spokesman for the 21st Century Commission on African-American Males, and we're very delighted that he is here.

Then we will be hearing from Robert Woodson, who is the president of the National Center for Neighborhood Enterprises here in Washington, DC.

Followed by John Hope Franklin, professor emeritus of Duke University from Durham, NC.

And then finally from Jewelle Taylor Gibbs, who is the associate professor from the University of California at Berkeley, and we're delighted that she is here as well.

If I may, I'm going to yield first to Senator Sanford and I know Senator D'Amato will support my doing so.

Senator Sanford, I want to say again how much this committee and I think the country is in your debt for your leadership in this area. I think you have helped more than anyone else in the Senate to really bring this matter front and center where it belongs.

I am profoundly in your debt for that leadership.

## OPENING REMARKS OF SENATOR SANFORD

Senator SANFORD. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for arranging for this series of Senate hearings. Along with the work of the Commission, I think this gives us a two track approach to looking for answers, answers that can be achieved within the governmental process and answers that must be achieved beyond anything that the Government can do directly.

I'm going to put my statement in in full, but let me first say that it's a special pleasure for me to have Dr. John Hope Franklin here, who is my long-time colleague and friend. And I am very happy to share his profound wisdom with the Members of the Senate.

I also would like to say a special word of thanks and welcome to Blair Underwood. I know at the last minute, on short notice, you agreed to come and we're very appreciative of that.

I can't move on without recognizing my long admiration for Clifford Alexander, whom I knew and certainly worked in the same direction in at least two other administrations. And we're certainly pleased to have Ms. Gibbs and Mr. Woodson with us.

So thank all of you for the time you are giving to solve, or at least to point the way to the solution of some of these longstanding and stubborn problems.

I'm not going to recount here all of the problems you're going to be talking about. You know that. This hearing does follow up on some of the preliminary work that the Commission has done which you remember. The conference to gather information, data and viewpoints for the Commission will be held later this week. The conference has been organized around a number of themes confronting Black males and their various opportunities, as well as the various obstacles in their way.

I hope what we get here can help the Commission and I know that it will, as it attempts to gather and sort out the kind of wisdom that we'll need if we're going to do anything now about these problems.

Some of you have been concerned with this, as I have, for almost a generation now and we've yet to find a satisfactory solution.

I hope now that this effort by the 21st Century Commission on African-American Males and the efforts of this committee will meet with greater success than some of our past initiatives. I know that the problem is too important and too urgent to avoid or ignore. I appreciate all of your efforts in helping us get on with resolving it.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

# OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR TERRY SANFORD
# HEARING ON THE PROBLEMS FACING AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES IN URBAN AMERICAN
MAY 21, 1991

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I would like to thank our distinguished witnesses for being with us this morning. It is a special pleasure for me to welcome an old friend from Duke University, John Hope Franklin, to this hearing this morning. I would also like to say a special word of thanks and welcome to Blair Underwood, who, on short notice, has agreed to share his time and many insights with us today and throughout the week.

Today we continue the much-needed effort begun in March to address the problems confronting African American males in our society today. As many in this room are aware, this hearing is part of a many-pronged attack on the black male crisis. In March, we received testimony from a wide variety of civic leaders and noted scholars. Their testimony provided much of the analytical basis for the first meeting in April of the 21st Century Commission on African American Males. This Commission is made up of a cross-section of scholars, public officials, education and foundation leaders, corporate officials and civic leaders. Its purpose, simply put, is to develop a new national policy addressing the black male crisis.

This hearing now follows up on some of the preliminary work of the Commission and provides a sound start for a three day conference organized by the Commission which will take place later this week. The conference has been organized around a number of thematic areas regarding the problems confronting black males including education, physical and mental health care, employment, substance abuse, primary and secondary social relationships and psycho-social development. It will bring together a wide-variety of both experts and role models who will focus their attention and talents on solutions to the many difficult problems facing black males.

The Commission will then use the information gathered through these hearings and the conference to develop a national policy to address the black male crisis and a strategy for its implementation.

There is no question that there is much work before us, but the problem is simply too urgent and too important to remain unattended to or ignored. We must be willing to take a hard honest look at the problem and to work creatively and cooperatively to find solutions. Our goal is to ensure that black males, like other Americans, are able to find meaningful and decent paying employment; live in a safe and secure environment; have a sense of connectedness with their families and with the larger society; develop longer life expectencies; and find their way towards values consistent with the needs of the larger society.

With the help and advice of experts like those appearing before us and the coordination of our efforts with the Commission, I am hopeful that we can develop and implement such a new national policy. Again, I very much thanks our witnesses for taking the time and effort to be with us this morning and look forward to learning from their testimony.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Sanford.
Senator D'Amato.

## OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR D'AMATO

Senator D'AMATO. Mr. Chairman, I too would like to commend you for calling these hearings. And certainly, Senator Sanford has focused in on one of the great problems facing our Nation, one that I think oftentimes, because it is so difficult, that we tend to shy away from.

But when we look at all the measurable statistics and recognize that we're talking about human beings and we're talking about the vibrance and vitality of not only Black Americans, but of our country, certainly something has to be done to attempt to address these problems, whether it's the area in terms of death rates or unemployment or the gap in earnings or the falling college enrollments, which is absolutely distressing and an indicator of a harbinger of even more difficult times for Black Americans and for our Nation as a whole.

I want to commend Senator Sanford for his work and hopefully, we can develop programs to begin to undertake this challenge in a meaningful way.

I don't know what the answer is, but it's distressing. It's more than distressing. When one sees the number of youngsters, babies, who are thrown out into the street, so to speak, who have no safe haven in terms of an educational complex that would provide for them and give them an opportunity to be nurtured and sheltered, I have to tell you, this is an area that we cannot just turn our back on because that turning of our back is just sowing the seeds for our own destruction as a nation.

And that is taking place today, literally. We don't like to focus in on that. But all of the indicators are that we're moving in the wrong direction and I certainly look forward to hearing the testimony from this distinguished panel and I thank the Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator D'Amato.

Before calling on Clifford Alexander, I want to just make an observation, because you served as Secretary of the Army during the Carter administration, and so you really understand the military side of our country's structure.

I was struck very much in watching Desert Storm to see the dangerous and the complex work that was carried out by our service men and women, our fighting forces that were sent over there, and to see that in terms of groups within our society represented in Desert Storm, that everyone was represented, but young Black men were represented in the highest percentages in relationship to their share of the national population.

So that within the structure of the military, we were calling in larger percentage numbers on that part of our society relative to all the other parts of the society.

And obviously, they did an extraordinary job. We've seen that, all the way from the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff down to the officers in the field that were operating the Patriot missiles.

I must say in my own mind, I find it impossible to reconcile how we can call on that group in our society in disproportionately large numbers to go carry out that work and then not have equivalent opportunities at home when people come back from wartime. Why there can't be jobs of all sorts available to be done and to allow people to fulfill their potential and to sustain themselves and their family and to build this country?

I just don't understand how, on the one hand, we have all that important work to do there and it was done and done to the highest level of standard and effort, and yet, when people come home, we seem to have an entirely different view of the importance of that part of our society and work here at home for them to do.

So I would be interested in any reflections that you have on that. I think that if we're going to call on people in wartime the obligation carries forward in peacetime as well.

I think probably even more so.

So I would be very pleased to start with you and then we'll go right down through our panelists here.

## STATEMENT OF CLIFFORD L. ALEXANDER, FORMER SECRETARY OF THE ARMY FOR THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION, FORMER CHAIRMAN, EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION, AND SPECIAL CONSULTANT TO PRESIDENT JOHNSON ON CIVIL RIGHTS, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. ALEXANDER. Thank you, Chairman Riegle, Senator D'Amato, and Senator Sanford.

This is the most important topic that this society has to face—the issue of black and white—that we have not solved. And we have made little progress.

To address your question, Senator Riegle: What is the reason so many Blacks are volunteering, and so many are in the enlisted ranks—about 29 percent of those in Desert Storm—and why is there such a high percentage of Latinos as well? Close to 40 percent of the forces in the gulf were black and brown. The reason they entered the service—particularly the Army—is that they perceived that they would and they did receive a better chance to display their skills there than they would have in corporate America.

Why more Black people "re-upped" than White people—in fact, twice as many—when I was Secretary of the Army, was that they perceived and, in fact, they did not have the same opportunities in White corporate America—despite the fact that they had the many requisite skills that they needed.

Some of the comments I'm going to make address that issue. It goes to the core of opportunity. It gets beyond the slogans and goes to what I perceive to be White America's responsibility. It is particularly the responsibility of the Senate of the United States to try and address some of these problems.

In your earlier hearings, you focused on some of the problems. Since that time, an Urban Institute Study has really underlined the magnitude of the problem we face.

That report showed that equally qualified White and Black young men had totally unequal experiences when they applied for jobs. In fact, White men received 3 times as many offers as similarly qualified Black men.

This exposes the problem that we face today.

You asked that in my testimony, I focus on solutions. In order to find these solutions, you, and by this I mean you in the Senate, and all Americans who are interested in constructive change—as you are by holding these hearings—should look at the reasons that these problems exist for Black Americans in 1991.

First and foremost, this statement is about what you as white people think of us.

White America continues to paint pictures of Black America that determine our opportunities. You see us as less than you are. You think that we're not as smart, not as energetic, not as well suited to supervise you as you are to supervise us, that we are looking for something extra—a Government program that gives us something we do not deserve. You think that our sons and daughters are taking the places in colleges that if the world were only fair, would go to your White children instead.

And yes, if you see a Black man, you think you'd better cross the street before something bad happens to you. Black men face that every second in America: being perceived negatively and being feared because, and only because, of the color of their skin.

These are the ways that you perceive us, and your perceptions are negative. They are fed by motion pictures, ad agencies, newspapers and television. If you want to show "clean," "brave" and "reverent," color it white. If it is "shiftless," "crime ridden" and "overcrowded," color that black.

Creative White America has fed us those negative stereotypes since the days of Step'n Fetchit movies, and Senator Jesse Helms' political advertisements perpetuate those insults today.

This is about what you think of us. When you were young, the racial stereotypes projected by ad agencies, decades of movies and television, told you, and they still tell your children today, that we are less than you.

Because of the negative perceptions that you have accepted about Black men, when you decide where to live or whom to hire, those Black men become the people whom you most want to avoid.

White men and women can develop solutions. Therefore, it is somewhat ironic that I'm speaking about the issue today in the most prestigious segregated body in America—the U.S. Senate.

Black men can only nibble at the edges of power in America. Yes, we are better off than we were 20 years ago. But then, so are you.

The economic relationship between black and white is the same as it was in the early 1960's. A black family still earns $57 to every $100 earned by a White family, about the same as in 1961. We can eat in most restaurants, play golf in some private clubs, and attend the best schools, albeit in small numbers.

Yes, we're only nibbling at the edges and you, my friends, are the reason why.

During my lifetime—and I wish you'd listen carefully because I plan to live a while—no Black person will join your exclusive Senate club, run a Fortune 500 company, be president of NBC, CBS, CNN, ABC. No black person will become president of an Ivy League school or head of the Kennedy Center.

You are determined to reserve those powerful positions for your own kind. Yes, we nibble at the edges while you enjoy the hearty meals.

Now what can you as individuals or as a body do to make this country a place of true opportunity for Black men and women, too?

First, you can set a good example. Whenever you're invited to a meeting, inquire whether the luncheon or country club where you're meeting discriminates against Jews, Latinos, Asians, Blacks, or women. If it does discriminate, do not attend the meeting and tell the person who issued the invitation why you have declined.

If we are good enough to die for America in the Persian Gulf, you should be good enough to discourage the bigots who keep us out of those clubs where so many major decisions are made right here at home.

Continue to examine legislation that is intended to promote fairness in the workplace. The laws now rely far too much on the Federal courts and my profession—lawyers—and not nearly enough on the speedy administrative remedies to correct acts of employment discrimination.

Remember that the answers to these problems lie with White America. You are just as creative as we are. Don't always look to your Black experts, but give the issues some thought yourselves. Then devise an action plan.

Remember, each of you has an excellent public forum here in America for addressing the negative perceptions about Blacks.

I know that you've all given the so-called "black" speech for the Urban League, but it would be far better to give a speech on equal employment opportunity before the Dallas or the Detroit Economic Club.

Each of you also should look at your own personal staffs. Are all of those who now hold positions of authority White men who look, walk, and talk like you? Are you setting the proper example for the rest of America? Do you have minority men and women who work on a variety of issues ranging from agriculture to defense, or do they only plan the infrequent meetings with Black leaders?

Encourage Black business. When I was Secretary of the Army, minority business with the Department of the Army during those 4 years increased from $98 million to over $1 billion. The entire Government needs to make that kind of advancement.

The Department of Defense, however, has chosen to ignore your own legislative mandate for approximately 5-percent minority business. They've ignored it. Do you accept that failure because it concerns minority business?

I certainly hope not.

You should remember that we all need to recognize the reasons that we have these problems before we can develop programmatic solutions.

When I was Chairman of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in 1967 to 1969, over 20 years ago, we did studies and in those studies we determined that at least 75 percent of the reason Black people were not promoted, did not receive jobs—75 percent of it—was significantly and directly attributable to plain old prejudice.

Today's studies show the same thing.

You must face your prejudices. White America must reeducate itself and then move on. In this Senate of the United States you should spend days, weeks, even months of your time addressing these prejudices and setting out ways to correct both misperceptions and inequalities.

White America needs to turn the sweet talk into fast action. It is up to you. Thank you so much for your time.

The **Chairman**. Thank you, Mr. Alexander.

[The complete statement of Clifford L. Alexander follows:]

### Testimony by Clifford L. Alexander before the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs
May 21, 1991

Your hearings earlier this year focussed on the problems that black males face today in the United States of America. Since that time, a new Urban Institute report has underlined the magnitude of the problem. That report shows that equally qualified white and black young men had totally unequal experiences when they applied for jobs. In fact, the white men received three times as many offers as qually qualified black men. This exposes the problems we must face today!

You asked that my testimony today focus on solutions. In order to find these solutions you and all Americans who are interested in constructive change should look at the reasons that these problems exist for black males in America in 1991.

First and foremost, this statement is about what you as white people think about us. White America continues to paint pictures of black America that determine our opportunities. You see us as less than you are. You think that we are not as smart, not as energetic, not as well suited to supervise you as you are to supervise us, that we are looking for something extra--a government program that gives us something we do not deserve. You think that our sons and daughters are taking the places in colleges that if the world were only "fair" would go to your white children instead. And yes, if you see a black man, you think that you had better cross the street before something bad happens to you. These are the ways you perceive us, and your perceptions are negative. They are fed by motion pictures, ad agencies, newspeople and television. If you want to show "clean," "brave," and "reverent"--color it white. If it is "shiftless," "crime ridden," and "over-crowded"--color that black. Creative white America has fed us those negative stereotypes since the days of the "Step'n Fetchit" movies, and Jesse Helm's political advertisements perpetuate these insults today.

This is about what you think about us. When you were young, the racial stereotypes projected by ad agencies, decades of movies and television told you--and they still tell your children today--that we are less than you. Because of the negative perceptions that you have accepted about black men, when you decide where to live or whom to hire, those black men become the people whom you most want to avoid.

White men and women can develop the solutions, therefore it is somewhat ironic that I am speaking about this issue today in the most prestigious segregated body in America--the United States Senate.

Black men can only nibble at the edges of power in America. Yes, we are better off than we were thirty years ago. But then so are you. The economic relationship between black and white is the same as it was in the early 1960s. A black family still earns only fifty-seven dollars to every white family's one hundred dollars--about the same as they did in 1961. We can eat in most restaurants, play golf at some private clubs, and attend the best schools--albeit in small numbers. Yes, we are only nibbling at the edges--and you are the reason why.

During my lifetime no black person will join your exclusive Senate club, run a Fortune 500 company, be president of NBC, CBS, CNN, or ABC, No black person will become president of an Ivy League school, or be head of the Kennedy Center. You are determined to reserve those powerful positions for your own kind. Yes, we nibble at the edges while you enjoy hearty meals.

Now what can you as individuals or as a body do to make this country a place of true opportunity for black men--and women too?

First, you can set a good example. Whenever you are invited to a meeting, inquire whether the luncheon club or country club where it is to be held discriminates against Jews, Latinos, Asians, blacks or women. It if does discriminate, do not attend the meeting, and tell the person who issued the invitation why you have declined. If we are good enough to die for America in the Persian Gulf, you should be good enough to discourage the bigots who keep us out of those clubs where so many major decisions are made right here at home.

Continue to examine legislation that is intended to promote fairness in the workplace. The laws now rely far too much on the Federal Courts and not nearly enough on speedy administative remedies to correct acts of employment discrimination. Remember that the answers to these problems lie within white America. You are just as creative as we are. Don't always look to your "black experts", but give the issues some thought yourselves. Then devise an action plan.

Remember, each of you has an excellent public forum here in America from which you can address the unfair negative perceptions about blacks. I know that you have given the so-called "black" speech at Urban League dinners. But your time would be far better spent giving a speech on equal employment opportunity to the Economic Club of Detroit or Dallas.

Each of you should also look at your own personal staff. Are all of those who now hold positions of authority white men who look, walk, and talk like you? Are you setting the proper example for the rest of America? Do you have minority men and women who work on a variety of issues ranging from agriculture to defense, or do they only plan your infrequent meetings with black leaders?

Encourage black businesses. When I Was Secretary of the Army, minority business with the Department of the Army increased over four years from ninety-eight million to one billion dollars. The entire government needs to make that kind of advancement. The Department of Defense, however, has ignored your own legislative mandate regarding minority businesses. Do you accept this failure because it concerns minority business? I certainly hope not.

You should remember that we all need to recognize the reasons that we have these problems before we can develop programmatic solutions. When I was Chairman of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission more than twenty years ago, our studies determined that at least 75% of the time, plain old prejudice was the reasons that black men and women received lesser job opportunities and fewer promotions. Today's studies show the same thing. You must face your prejudices. White America must reeducate itself--and then move on from there. You should spend days, weeks, even months of your time addressing those prejudices and setting out ways to correct both misperceptions and inequalities. White America needs to turn sweet talk into fast action. It is up to you.

Clifford L. Alexander, President
Alexander & Associates, Inc.
400 C Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002
(202) 546-0111

The **Chairman**. Mr. Underwood, we'd be pleased to hear from you. I'm going to have you pull that microphone maybe just a little closer so that everyone can hear you through the room.

## STATEMENT OF BLAIR UNDERWOOD, SPOKESMAN, TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY COMMISSION ON AFRICAN-AMERICAN MALES, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. **Underwood**. Thank you very much. Good morning, Mr. Chairman.

The **Chairman**. Nice to have you.

Mr. **Underwood**. Honorable Members of Congress and other distinguished guests.

I come to you today not as a scholar, but sprouting forth startling statistics, and I will be giving you quite a few, so please bear with me, nor as a civic leader bent upon pleading a case for a particular constituency.

I sit before this honorable body as one African-American, a microcosmic portion of that population which is the target of these congressional hearings.

I am here today for one simple reason—to share with you the unpleasant drama that comprise the day-to-day experience of almost all, if not all, African-American males.

In a recent broadcast of the TV series, "L.A. Law," I had the opportunity to reenact a drama. I played the role of a young African-American male—the character's name was and is Jonathan Rollins—seeking to transact the day-to-day matters of his life. As I jogged through the streets of Los Angeles, I symbolized the millions of young African-American males who jog the streets of America on a daily basis.

In this televised representation of the day-to-day life of an African-American male, I found myself an innocent, now not partially innocent, nor minutely guilty, but wholly innocent victim of suspicion and implied guilt.

My behaviors, my actions, my speech provided no metacommunicative clues to alert the police officer that I was perhaps a criminal. Yet, as this fictional drama continued, I was pushed around, arrested, and psychologically abused and humiliated.

This was, of course, a fictional drama. However, the theme for this particular episode was not based on fiction. It was based upon an actual situation which happened to me in Los Angeles while I was driving in the neighborhood where I lived.

During the spring of 1991, another incident occurred which demonstrated the value that society places upon the life of a Black male. The now infamous, widely televised showing of police brutality directed toward a Black man in the streets of Los Angeles demonstrated that African-American males have no protectors. The perpetrator of the violence against African-American males were those soldiers of society whose badges were designed to represent a shield of protection for all citizens.

Since that time, and quite honestly, long before that time, a silent fear has been generated within Black men across the Nation. African-American males have historically been a people of courage. African-American males have historically battled known enemies who have attacked us with known and familiar artifacts of war. The enemy is now, however, unknown and undefined. The tools and methods and timing of attacks are unpredictable. For now, there is a fear that the enemy is dressed in blue.

In other words, African-American males must ask themselves, have police officers themselves joined the ranks of those who commit acts of racially motivated violence against them?

Further, racially motivated violence in the society as a whole poses a threat to the lives of African-American males. It is not surprising that the underevaluation of African-American males leads to a situation in which African-American males are disproportionately the victims of racially motivated crimes and violence. Of even more consequence, the American society simply does not know or does not care what this psychological abuse does to African-American males.

When Cobbs and Greer wrote "Black Rage" more than two decades ago, the world listened but did not intervene. The high crime rate in the African-American community today is a direct outcome of this country's intellectual and behavioral neglect of young African-American males. Racism erodes more than jobs. It erodes the mind. It distorts perception. It creates a type of social insanity which links together those behaviors which are so observable in our urban centers.

Yet, researchers and policymakers know very little about the psychological aspect of the lives of African-American men. If effective intervention programs are to be implemented, we must study in greater detail the motives and the beliefs of young African-American urban males.

When Dr. Margaret Beale Spencer testified before this committee on March 19, 1991, concerning the plight of young African-American males, she stated:

> We're here today because it is clear that we are not building our youth for the rigors of the future in the case of African-American males who continue to live in an extremely high risk environment. Their hostile environment exists not only because of economic issues and the peculiar social focus which accompany the American experience for people of color, but, moreover, relative to prevention and intervention efforts, African-American males represent the group for whom we have the least amount of solid scholarship about their life course development.

In other words, Dr. Spencer and other psychologists and psychiatrists see the exceptionally high rates of Black-on-Black homicides as indicative of the cumulative impact of the multiple adverse racial and cultural experiences of African-American men. Self-esteem has been most and/or deteriorated; in many instances, hope itself is vanquished. Consequently, anger, depression, and self-disgust have taken root.

Of even greater consequence, African-American males are disproportionately victims of crimes; additionally, they are disproportionately crime victimizers.

In 1987, for example, 49.1 percent of African-American males per one thousand persons were victims of crimes of violence relative to 31.5 percent of African-American females, 35 percent of White males and 20.1 percent of White females.

I'm starting with my statistics, so, please, stay with me.

For younger African-American males, these rates were even higher. Nearly 91 crimes of violence per one thousand persons were committed against African-American males 12 to 15 years of age. The rate for those African-American males 16 to 19 years of age was even higher—101 per one thousand persons.

Interestingly, many of these crimes were committed by African-American men against African-American men.

In 1988, for example, 51.5 percent of all murders and homicides of African-American males were committed by other African-American males.

Existing evidence indicates, however, that African-American males, if arrested for a crime, are more likely to be convicted, sentenced, and jailed. This tendency emerges because many persons have come to associate African-American males with criminal behavior.

In 1985, for example, African-American males comprised 23.2 percent of the arrests for all crimes. By 1988, 29.6 percent of the total number of arrests for all crimes involved African-American males.

However, African-American males comprised in the subsequent periods 45 percent to 48 percent of all inmates in Federal, State, and local prisons and jails.

Evidence also indicates that African-American males receive longer sentences than their White counterparts who have committed the same crime. Given this trend, it should be less than shocking that the number of young African-American males under the control of the criminal justice system may possibly exceed those in this age group who are enrolled in college.

As one reviews the data, it becomes clear that our criminal justice system is not dealing fairly with this population segment. However, longer sentences and more convictions do not only punish African-American males, taxpayers are the ones who pay the costs—you and me.

The justice system's direct expenditures totaled nearly $61 billion in 1988. But these expenses were for the justice system itself. Total operating costs for all State and Federal prisons were $14,485,556,347. The overall cost of building new prisons per bed averages $53,663.

In 1988 alone, 18 States built new prisons to house only 16,914 inmates. The total cost of these new facilities was $1,086,954,748. These costs are staggering.

But crime is only one outcome of this complex situation. Low-income, or unemployed or imprisoned African-American males do not get married and build families. While there are direct and immediate socio-economic costs which accrue from low rates of family formation, additional problems emerge because of issues surrounding the inter-generational transfer of weak labor market skills.

Let me explore this issue for a moment.

In the 20-year period from 1970 to 1990, the proportion of African-American families with children under 18 headed by two parents dropped 64.3 percent of all families with children to 39.4 percent—a decrease of more than 38 percent. The current socio-economic status of African-American men has had a direct and adverse effect upon African-American family life.

Let me summarize a few trends.

In 1990, slightly more than 50 percent of all African-American families were married couples. As recently as 1960, however, 73.6 percent of African-American families were married couples.

These figures correlate very strongly with unemployment rates. Although African-American male unemployment was still nearly twice as high as White males in the 1960's, African-American male unemployment hovered around 8 percent.

However, during the 1970's and early 1980's, African-American male unemployment rates were nearly always double-digit numbers—14.7 percent in 1975, 15.9 percent in 1981, 21 percent in 1983.

Subsequently, during this period, we observed an accelerated increase in female-headed households.

Female-headed households have grown even faster among those households with children. In 1990, for example, 56 percent of all households were headed by the mother only, and only 39 percent were headed by two parents.

It is interesting to note, however, that 4.3 percent of African-American families with children are maintained by the father. This is very interesting.

Approximately 3.8 percent of White families with children are maintained by the father. Thus, African-American males do seek to participate in the process of child rearing.

Now these figures represent aggregates. In urban areas, even a smaller proportion of families are of the married couple type. Of the approximate 6.2 million African-American families living in metropolitan areas, only 3 million or 48.4 percent are married couple families. In poverty areas in central cities, the number is even higher.

Families without a father experience a number of problems which are far less common among families which include both parents.

In 1989, only 11.8 percent of African-American married couple families were poor, but 46.5 percent of all African-American female headed households were poor. The figures for Whites were 5 percent and 25.4 percent, respectively.

Is everybody with me still? [Laughter.]

All right. Well, I think we know many of the problems, so I'm going to skip down.

Mr. Woodson. That would be very useful. [Laughter.]

Mr. Underwood. The bottom line is we know the problem and we're here to hopefully find solutions.

So let me end my remarks by commending Senator Terry Sanford and Governor L. Douglas Wilder of my home State of Virginia, who I don't see here today, but I would like to thank him because he's been very instrumental with Senator Sanford in bringing this all together—for having the wisdom and the courage to organize the 21st Century Commission on African-American Males.

With the race sensitivities this country is experiencing, the plight of young Black males will not be a popular campaign issue. And for these two men, both from the South, to take on the task of organizing and cohosting a 3-day action oriented conference devoted to seeking solutions to these problems, is uplifting.

So I thank you all.

I'm also honored to be participating in a panel with the renowned historian and scholar, John Hope Franklin, who is serving as a board member to the commission, and Dr. Jewelle Taylor Gibbs, who I will also hear from when she delivers her scholar presentation during the commission's national conference this week.

And I did say your son says hello from Los Angeles. [Laughter.]

If the commission is true to its mission, the final outcome of the long-term process will be a national policy statement capable of refortifying a foundation that has been crumbling away from beneath the feet of African-American males for too many years.

Make no mistake, the massive task before this committee, the commission, and our Nation will be time consuming.

And I hope to see it in my generation. I do plan to live a long time, also.

And yet, if we and all American citizens will commit ourselves to addressing the plight of today's African-American male, the African-American male of tomorrow will be committed to his education, to his family, and to his career, rather than to a correctional facility or an early grave.

Our efforts must be an ongoing struggle to eradicate that which denigrates, to uplift the disspirited, to make right the wrongs.

Obviously, in the final analysis, we cannot force those African-American males in need of help to do what's right, but we can begin to foster an environment in which they have a far greater incentive to become productive, law-abiding citizens.

We can provide an arena where the stage of life will call upon the individual to rise or fall, based primarily on the individual effort or lack thereof.

By pooling all of our resources, expertise, and sincere commitment of the private sector, academia, and government, I am supremely confident that we will succeed in doing just that in the coming years.

Again, I thank you for being here today, and I apologize if I was long winded.

The **Chairman**. Thank you very much, Mr. Underwood.

Mr. Woodson, we'd be pleased to hear from you now.

[The complete statement of Blair Underwood follows:]

# Testimony for

# Blair Underwood

Before the

Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee

Tuesday, May 21, 1991

Washington, D.C.

Prepared by
The 21st Century Commission
on African American Males

Mr. Chairman, Honorable members of Congress, and other distinguished guests. I come to you today not as a scholar sprouting forth startling statistics, nor as a civic leader bent upon pleading a case for a particular constituency. I sit before this honorable body as one African American -- a microcosmic portion of that population which is the target of these Congressional hearings. I am here today for one simple reason -- to share with you the unpleasant drama that comprise the day to day experience of almost all, if not all, African American males.

In a recent broadcast of the TV series "LA Law", I reenacted a drama. I played the role of a young African American male seeking to transact the day to day matters of his life. As I jogged through the streets of Los Angeles, I symbolized the millions of young African American males who jog the streets of America on a daily basis. In this televised representation of the day to day life of a African American male, I found myself an innocent, now not partially innocent, nor minutely guilty, but an wholly innocent victim of suspicion and implied guilt.

My behaviors, my actions, my speech provided no metacommunicative clues to alert the Police officer that I was perhaps a criminal. Yet, as this fictional drama continued, I was pushed around, arrested and psychologically abused and humiliated. This was, of course, but a fictional drama. However, the theme for this particular episode was not based on fiction - it was based upon an actual situation which happened to me, in Los Angeles, while I was driving in the neighborhood where I live. During the Spring of 1991, another incident occurred which demonstrated the value that society places upon the life of a black male. The now infamous, widely televised showing of police brutality directed toward a black man in the streets of Los Angeles demonstrated that African American males have no protectors. The perpetrator of the violence against African American males were those soldiers of society whose badges were designed to represent a shield of protection for all citizens. Since that time, a silent fear has been generated within Black men across the nation. African American males have historically been a people of courage. African American males have historically battled known enemies who have attacked us with known and familiar artifacts of war. The enemy is now, however, unknown and undefined. The tools and methods, and timing of attacks are unpredictable. For now, there is a fear that the enemy is dressed in "blue".

In other words, African American males must ask themselves "Have police officers themselves joined the ranks of those who commit acts of racially motivated violence against them? Further, racially motivated violence in the society as a whole poses a threat to the lives of African American males. It is not surprising that the underevaluation of African American males leads to a situation in which African American males are disproportinately the victims of racially motivated crimes and violence. Of even more consequence, the American society simply does not know -- or does not care -- what this psychological abuse does to African American males.

When Cobbs and Greer wrote Black Rage more than two decades ago, the world listened but did not intervene. The high crime rate in the African American community today is a direct outcome of this country's intellectual and behavioral neglect of young African American males. Racism erodes more than jobs. It erodes the mind. It distorts perception.

It creates a type of social insanity which links together those behaviors which are so observable in our urban centers. Yet, researchers and policymakers know very little about the psychological aspect of the lives of African American men. If effective intervention programs are to be implemented, we must study in greater detail the motives and the beliefs, of young African American urban males.

When Dr. Margaret Beale Spencer testified before this committee on March 19th, concerning the plight of young African American males she stated:

> "We are here today because it is clear that we are not building our youth for the rigors of the future in the case of African American males who continue to live in an extremely

high-risk environment. Their hostile environment exists not only because of economic issues and the peculiar social focus which accompany the American experience for people of color, but, moreover, relative to prevention and intervention efforts, African American males represent the group for whom we have the _least_ amount of solid scholarship about their life course _development_."

In other words, Dr. Spencer and other psychologists and psychiatrists see the exceptionally high rates of Black-on-Black homicides as indicative of the cumulative impact of the multiple adverse racial and cultural experiences of African American men. Self-esteem has been lost and/or deteriorated; in many instances hope itself is vanquished.

Consequently, anger, depression and self-disgust have taken root.

Of even greater consequence, African American males are disproportionately victims of crimes; additionally, they are disproportionately crime victimizers. In 1987, for example, 49.1 % of African American males per one thousand persons were victims of crimes of violence relative to 31.5% of African American females, 35% of white males and 20.1% of white females. For younger African American males, these rates were even higher. Nearly 91 crimes of violence per 1,000 persons were committed against African American males 12-15 years of age. The rate for those African American males 16-19 years of age was even higher, 101 per 1,000 persons.[1] Interestingly, many of these crimes were committed by African American men against African American men. In 1988, for example, 51.5% of all murders and homicides of African American males were committed by other African American males.

Existing evidence indicates, however, that African American males, if arrested for a crime are more likely to be convicted, sentenced and jailed. This tendency emerges because many persons have come to associate African American males with criminal behavior. In 1985, for example, African American males comprised 23.2% of the arrests for all crimes. By 1988, 29.6% of the total number of arrests for all crimes involved African American males. However, African American males comprised in the subsequent periods 45%-48% of all inmates in federal, state and local prisons and jails.[2] Evidence also indicates that African American males receive longer sentences than their white counterparts who have committed the same crime. Given this trend, it should be less than shocking that the number of young African American males under the control of the criminal justice system may possibly exceed those in this age group who are enrolled in college.

As one reviews the data, it becomes clear that our criminal justice system is not dealing fairly with this population segment. However, longer sentences and more convictions do not only punish African American males, taxpayers are the ones who pay the costs. The justice system's direct expenditures totalled nearly $61 billion in 1988.[3] But these expenses were for the justice system itself. Total operating costs for all state and federal prisons were $14,851,556,347. The overall cost of building new prisons per bed averages $53,663. In 1988 alone, 18 states built new prisons to house only 16,914 inmates. The total cost of these new facilities was $1,086,954,748.[4] These costs are staggering.

But crime is only one outcome of this complex situation. Low income, or unemployed, or imprisoned African American males do not get married and build families. While there are direct and immediate socio-economic costs which accrue from low rates of family formation, additional problems emerge because of issues surrounding the inter-generational transfer of weak labor market skills. Let me explore this issue for a moment.

In the twenty year period from 1970 to 1990, the proportion of African American families with children under 18 headed by two parents dropped from 64.3% of all families with children to 39.4% - a decrease of more than 38 percent. The current socio-economic status of African American men has had a direct and adverse effect upon African American family life. Let me summarize a few trends:

- In 1990, slightly more than 50% of all African American families were married couples. As recently as 1960, however, 73.6% of African American families were married couples. [5]

- These figures correlate very strongly with unemployment rates. Although African American male unemployment was still nearly twice as high as white males in the sixties, African American male unemployment hovered around 8%. [6]

- However, during the seventies and early eighties African American male unemployment rates were nearly always double digit numbers-14.7% in 1975, 15.9% in 1981, 21% in 1983 Subsequently, during this period, we observed an accelerated increase in female headed households. [7]

- Female headed households have grown ever faster among those households with children. In 1990, for example, 56% of all households were headed by the mother only, and only 39% were headed by two parents. [8]

- It is interesting to note, however, that 4.3% of African American families with children are maintained by the father. (Approximately, 3.8% of white families with children are maintained by the father.) Thus, African American males do seek to participate in the process of child rearing. [9]

- Now, these figures represent aggregates. In urban areas, even a smaller proportion of families are of the married couple type. Of the approximate 6.2 million African American families living in metropolitan areas only 3 million or 48.4% are married couple families. In poverty areas in central cities, the number is even higher. [10]

Families without a father experience a number of problems which are far less common among families which include both parents:

- In 1989, only 11.8% of African American married couple families were poor but 46.5% of all African American female headed households were poor. (The figure for whites were 5% and 25.4% respectively.) [11]

- Poverty, of course correlates with out-of-wedlock births, higher rates of crime, and other socially dysfunctional behaviors.

The economic problems of the African American males affect African American families, not only those who are at or below the poverty line. For example, the data for African American female college graduates are startling:

- Approximately, 50% of African American college graduates have husbands who are not college graduates (relative to only 28% of white females).

- Approximately, 12% of African American female college graduates have husbands who are unemployed and/or out of the labor force (vs. 7% of their white counterparts).

- Approximately, 52% of white female college graduates but only 28% of African American female college graduates have husbands who earn above $700 per week.

The crisis status of urban African American males cannot be separated from the problems of the African American family. The African American family is the foundation that nourishes achievement, provides support, enhances self esteem, shapes our ideals and goals and tempers behavior. It is indeed a fact that African American families need African American men who are healthy, employed and productive in our community and in society.

Today, as more and more children, youth and families internalize the mores of the drug culture, we are beginning to see change in the nature of African American families. We know the root causes. But causality is one thing and responsibility is another. Therefore, we must take the responsibility for urging national leadership to address these root causes. We cannot continue to blame the victims.

We cannot afford to lose a generation of African American men. Individually and collectively and through every organizational and Congressional channel, we need to call upon the historic traditions and values of the African American heritage. The importance of family, the need for individual enterprise, hard work, and the thirst for education are values that have been fundamental to the survival of African Americans.

## III. Policy Implication

The range of problems which relate to African American males extend beyond the economic and the familial. African American males die from almost all major diseases at a rate which exceeds all other demographic groups. African American males are more likely to suffer from work-related disabilities than any other group. African American males disproportionately die from AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome), and the litany of statistics continues....

Now all of this data does help. We need to have an accurate portrait of the range of problems which face African American males. We need to recognize that in our great country in the year 1991, a number of factors elevate the odds that a African American male child born today will be unemployed, a crime victim or victimizer, and/or a death statistic.

But as Senator Sanford has been observing in his public remarks concerning this issue, there is another side to all of this madness. Approximately 50% of African American males have wives and/or families. Another 75% of those age 20-29 have had no serious encounters with the law. Of the approximately 2.6 million African American males in the age group 16-24 who are not enrolled in school, 56% are gainfully employed.[5] In other words, the complete story of African American males in this country is not one of failure. The level of success exceeds the level of failure. It is towards these success stories that public policymakers must look if you are to frame policies to reduce those environmental factors which threaten the growth and development of future generations of young African American males. And, as you look backwards to see what policies helped African American Americans in general, and African American males in particular, you should be encouraged, for in spite of charges to the contrary, numerous programs have worked. Additionally, as we look around we see low cost partnerships between government, industry, and community groups which have been successful in ameliorating the problems of African American males. Let's just briefly review some of these programs.

First, sufficient research indicates that poverty breeds crime and other socially dysfunctional behaviors. Poverty correlates with fewer doctor visits, disease, and early mortality. Through the various antipoverty programs of the past decades, poverty across African American households dropped from 55.1% of the African American population in 1959 to approximately 31% today. This represents a 43% decrease.

Second, through government assistance for all levels of education, the educational status of African American males and their families rapidly accelerated as a direct consequence of federal intervention. In 1970, the white dropout rate was 10.8% in the age group 14 to 24. In 1988, it was still 10.8%. No special attrition programs had been targeted towards this group. A wide range of programs were targeted towards African American youth. Consequently, the dropout rate decreased by approximately 45% - from 22.2% in 1970 to 12.4% in 1988.[6]

Third, the government more recently "demarketed" single family households and teen pregnancy by redrafting and reframing public assistance programs. These efforts were successful. From 1970 to 1980, African American single family households had grown by 6.1% and white single parents had increased by 5.7%. From 1980 to 1990, however, the growth among both groups slowed significantly. African American single family households grew by 3.8% instead of the previous decade's 6.1%. White single family households increased by 3.1% rather than the prior 5.87% of the seventies. Public intervention efforts worked. The few examples cited are far from exhaustive. Evaluation results indicate that hearings such as these and the resultant strategies have effectively ameliorated a broad range of socio-economic problems.

Let's turn, though, specifically to the problems confronting African American males. What are some policy directions that are suggested by existing theory and data? Some of these can be briefly summarized:

1. First, the data suggest that many problems facing African American males are employment related. Now, its been a long time since policymakers have used the term "full-employment" in policy discussions. But macroeconomic traumas which aggregate unemployment do disproportionately reduce the employment levels of African American males. Moreover, when "normalcy" returns, African American males are not fully restored to employment. Even African American Veterans are unemployed at 1.7 times the rate of white veterans. We have got to think about generating higher levels of employment in urban as well as in suburban areas.[7]

2. Secondly, we must retain policies which will keep labor markets operating in a nondiscriminatory fashion. Engineers are needed and will be needed even more in the year 2000. But African American engineers are unemployed at 3 times the rate of white engineers. To use a cliche, African American males must know that when they do prepare themselves, the "gates of opportunity will be open."

3. Third, but of equal importance, as policymakers you must provide full support to employment and training programs. While some of the existing programs may need reshaping so that they train persons for jobs that will be available on into the future, evaluation studies have shown that even the much

maligned Jobs Corps improved the work habits of its participants.

4. Fourth, we must carefully tailor our education strategies so that the decision to participate in higher education is made more attractive. African American families have, on average, low family incomes. Accordingly, African American families are slightly more dependent upon aid from federal sources relative to their white counterparts. Although 16.1% of African American students in college work full-time, relative to 12.4% of white students, the economic costs of college are sometimes prohibitive.[8] Studies of attrition have indicated that economic factors are cited as a major cause of dropout

for African American males.

5. Fifth, we must enter some new territories and systematically coordinate partnerships between the various sectors of the society. Social support groups, mentor/mentee relationships can be proliferated with sufficient coordination and support.

I was most honored when Senator Sanford and the 21st Century Commission on African American Males encouraged me to testify at this historic hearing. And while I know legislation alone will not solve these problems - this Committee's courage in making the United States Senate aware of the plight of the African American males should be commended. Holding this hearing in conjunction with the 21st Century Commission on African American Males first national conference, is a clear signal that you are indeed, very sincere about identifying ways of addressing this problem.

This past weekend my family and I reviewed the tapes of the first Senate hearing on the plight of young males and we were very impressed with the Commission Scholars who testified. Dr. Marvin H. McKinney of the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation discussed the need for greater public support of medical services and further cited problem areas that stifle growth and ultimately shorten life expectancy for Black males. Thus, we need to refine these suggestions and transform them into policy recommendations that realistically can be implemented.

A number of speakers addressed what I call "quality of life" issues relative to Black males. Also, I was quite struck by Mr. Marc Mauer's testimony at the hearing when he mentioned that our proud country has the "highest incarceration rate of any nation in the world." He also cited data showing that the incarceration rate of African American males in the United States is four times the incarceration rate of South African Black males who live under a socially oppressive system. This Committee MUST reconsider how the criminal law and justice system operates and how we can be instrumental in reducing the rate of incarceration of so many African American men and youth in this country.

This Committee must also seek drug treatment and prevention strategies that have been successful, and determine whether or not they are applicable and can be replicated.

The urgency of assisting African American men effectively to gain a place in the labor market was mentioned by Senator Sanford, you Senator Riegle, Dr. Height, Governor Wilder, and nearly all of the scholars who spoke. The disproportionately high levels of African American male unemployment is related to almost every other burden of the African American male. We need to look at unemployment in a fresh way in order to generate positive change.

I recognize that this committee will need to attach some numbers in terms of dollar costs to any proposals that are made. Presently, there are, of course, costs to be borne by the public either way. In one example, Mr. Mauer pointed out that the annual costs associated with the housing and care of these inmates per year is nearly seven billion dollars. More than $15,000 per prisoner.

As a point of comparison, the total Gross National Product generated by the Black community in 1989 was approximately $255 billion dollars and the per capita income was $8,747. That disparity is a national embarrassment.

There are also indirect costs, both monetary and humane, associated with the other problems experienced by African American males -- drug use, crime, health care, loss of earnings and the tax on those earnings. This Committee needs an accurate assessment of those figures. You need to know the time lags that would be encountered if there were some redirection of funds toward viable solution-oriented programs.

Finally, let me end my remarks by commending Senator Terry Sanford and Governor L. Douglas Wilder of my home-state of

Virginia, for having the wisdom and the courage to organize the 21st Century Commission on African American males.

With the race sensitivities this country is experiencing, the plight of young black males will not be popular campaign issue; and for these two men - both from the south - to take on the task of organizing and co-hosting a three day action-orientated conference devoted to seeking solutions to these problems is uplifting.

I am also honored to be participating in this panel with the renowned historian and scholar John Hope Franklin, who is serving as a board member to the Commission; and Dr. Jewelle Taylor Gibbs, who I will also hear from when she delivers her scholar presentation during the Commission's national conference this week.

If the Commission is true to its mission, the final outcome of the long-term process will be a national policy statement capable of refortifying a foundation that has been crumbling away from beneath the feet of African American males for too many years.

Make no mistake, the massive task before this Committee, the Commission, and our nation, will be time-consuming.

And yet, if we and all American citizens will commit ourselves to addressing the plight of today's African American male, the African American male of tomorrow will be committed to his education; to his family; and to his career....rather than to a correctional facility or an early grave.

Our efforts must be an on-going struggle to eradicate that which denigrates; to uplift the dispirited; to make right the wrongs.

Obviously, in the final analysis, we cannot force those African American males in need of help to do what's right, but we can begin to foster an environment in which they have a far greater incentive to become productive, law-abiding citizens.

We can provide an arena where the stage of life will call upon the individual to rise or fall....based primarily on the individual effort or lack of it.

By pooling the resources, expertise, and sincere commitment of the private sector, academia, and government, I am supremely confident that we will succeed in doing just that in the coming years.

Again, I thank you for being here today. Senator Sanford I look forward to attending the Commission's Conference.

## ENDNOTES

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5. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Monthly Labor Review, December 1989, "Research Summaries: Children in 2-Works Families and Real Family Income", pg. 48-52.

6. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Cenusu, Household and Family Characteristics: March 1990 and 1989, Series, P-210, No. 447. Table A, page 2.

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8. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1985 Table 682, Page 407

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10. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Money Income and Poverty Status in the United States, 1989, Page 9

11. Meisenheimer, Joseph, "Black College Graduates in the Labor Market, 1979 and 1989", Monthly Labor Review, Vol 113, No. 11, November 1990

## STATEMENT OF ROBERT WOODSON, PRESIDENT, NATIONAL CENTER FOR NEIGHBORHOOD ENTERPRISE, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. WOODSON. Thank you, Senator. I, too, would like to thank you for giving me this opportunity.

My testimony will be a ground level view of these problems, from the perspective of those communities experiencing the problem.

I think if we are to reach some useful conclusions, it's important for this committee to state the issue clearly, and I have not heard it stated clearly. Because just as not all Black people look alike, walk alike, and think alike, we all don't suffer alike, either.

And therefore, I think it does a disservice to the issue when we aggregate numbers about Black people, to say, for instance, that Black America makes 54 percent of the money of White America. That then compares the income of your panelists here with some Black person working in a restaurant washing dishes. And that does a disservice to them.

If you look at the numbers and you disaggregate the population, you will find that in the past 20 years, Black families with incomes of $35,000, grew from 15.7 to 21 percent and Black families with incomes of $50,000 grew 350 percent, while Black families at the bottom making $10,000 grew also.

So that the income gap between low-income Blacks is higher than the income gap between Whites and Blacks. And therefore, I think we engage, and have been for the past 20 years, a cruel bait and switch game, when we talk about the Black males in crisis.

Now all Black men are in crisis. The panelists sitting here do not have Black men in crisis. They're in private schools. They go to the best universities. They have strong families behind them. They're not going to be out here mugging even if they drop out of college.

And so I think it's important to distinguish between that group of Blacks and those Blacks in the inner city who are living in public housing or living in communities that are truly at risk, that we must really address our issues.

In an article written by William Raspberry, a reporter at that time in 1961, October 29, quoted the civil rights leadership of that day by saying that poor Blacks were not benefiting from the gains of the civil rights movement, that they have problems that extend beyond race and that continued emphasis on race specific solutions would never address their problems, that they're economic, this is a crisis of self-doubt.

But what we did was ignore that reality and continue to press race specific solutions that benefited those Blacks who were prepared differently to walk through the doors of opportunity once they were opened.

And as a consequence, we have a situation right now where Blacks control 8 of the 12 major cities and many of the poor Blacks are no better off in those cities than they were when controlled by Whites because the issue is not to change the race or sex of the ruler; it's changing the rules of the game. And the rules of the game have not been changed.

And so what I am proposing is that we have got to begin to first of all understand that up until 1959, 78 percent of all Black families were whole. Even in the face of a depression, when there was massive unemployment, Black families maintained strong family units, even when we were being lynched every day. Even when we were denied the opportunity to vote, we maintained strong households. Up until 1959, less than 2 percent of Black children were raised in households where the mother never married.

But that has changed and we must ask ourselves, have Blacks been the unintended victims of the helping hand? It's important to look at why this change occurred so dramatically.

Durham, NC, what we call the Black Wall Street, up until the 1960's, they were the Black Wall Street and there was a mecca of Black economic and social development in that city. Not one business of the 100 Black businesses fell even with the Depression.

And yet, within 2 years of urban renewal, 100 Black businesses were eliminated, 600 Black households, and 70 acres of lands were razed. In that community today, 50 acres continue to remain flat.

And as a consequence, we have had a displacement of people. And so what we must do, then, is that we continue to rely upon what I call failure studies to inform us as to what we do.

We have in the past 25 years as a Nation expended $1 trillion in programs to aid the poor by Federal, State, and local government. Twenty-five years ago, 70 cents of every dollar went directly to the poor to address these problems.

Today, 70 cents of every dollar goes to those who serve poor people in what I call the Poverty Pentagon. And only 30 cents of every dollar goes directly to those communities experiencing the problem.

And therefore, what we propose that we must do is first of all recognize that the real experts are really not at this table. The real experts will not be attending this conference over the next 4 days where the registration fee is $350, where attendance at a banquet is $300, where the hotel costs are $87.

When you have a conference addressing the problems of the Black male in crisis and have those kinds of fees to be charged to come together, you are not going to attract the kind of people in those communities.

All right. What should we do?

What we have been doing at the National Center and another few of our national colleagues is that we recognize that there are indigenous healing agents within these communities, young people like Officer W.W. Johnson back here who has been profiled on a lot of national television shows and Bill Raspberry wrote about him about his help for Elijah Harris, a young Black man who was in the drug trade, he was 16 years old. He had been through the school system. They failed him. The social service system failed him. Psychiatrists, counselors, everyone failed him.

W.W. Johnson arrested the young boy, got him out of jail, took him into his home. The boy was making straight F's. And then he began—he was 10 points from making the honor roll a few weeks ago before he was gunned down on the streets and died.

W.W. Johnson and Kent Amos, people like Kimmie Gray in far Northeast, a woman abandoned by her husband at age 19 with 5 children and welfare. Got off welfare in 3 years and sent all 5 of her kids to college and sent 680 other kids from the one public housing project to college.

They have names like Alice Harris out of Los Angeles, who did the same thing with gang youth. These are the people who continue to share the same ZIP Code with the kids experiencing the problem, that have demonstrated that they can reach out and change the self-perception and alter the conduct and the value choices that these young people make.

Yet, they are out in those neighborhoods struggling and they are the ones who have demonstrated they really are the experts or they have the capacity to dramatically change the lives of these young people.

And yet, most of them are not funded. They're not the kind of people who have the money to come before a Senate committee to give testimony. And if you look at the agenda and the presenters at this conference on the Black male, most of them are Ph.D.'s. Most of them—and I'm not trying to depreciate this, but I think we need to be very honest because these are very critical issues.

People—John Jacobs, God bless him, Dorothy Hite, all these other people who have been here for a long time, the scholars who have studied the problems, these are not the people who have children in crisis.

We need to bring people to the table in these neighborhoods who have demonstrated that they can change the value choices.

What do I recommend specifically?

A. We need to abandon these failure studies that characterize most of the social science research and make Federal dollars available for scholars to go and others to go into these neighborhoods and find out why 50 percent of Black families are raising Black males in low-income communities who are not dropping out of school, who are not becoming teen fathers, who are graduating from school and living productive lives.

We need to know as a base of information why and how they are achieving against the odds.

The second thing we need to do is establish what Kent Amos and others have called safe houses. Schools that are being abandoned need to be taken over and renovated so that they can become places where people like W. W. Johnson and others in the community can bring young people in every day after school so that they can do homework, receive a good meal, and have a place of refuge.

Satellite homes in those communities need to be supported where families are already successfully raising their boys and girls. We should enable kids who require more custodial care to come into those homes, yet remain in their neighborhoods where even drug addicted parents can continue to relate to them because even drug addicted parents have some parental quotient that can be exploited.

So we need to put the resources at the disposal of people living there.

Another recommendation is in many of the young people who are at risk are being incubated—tomorrow's criminals are being incubated in the foster care system. Studies that we have conducted, 3,000 Black households where personal interviews were conducted, a self-help survey.

We found that 30 percent of all Blacks interviewed, this represents an 80-percent sample size, expressed an interest in taking into their homes nonrelatives.

So the will, the capacity to accept these youngsters and provide a refuge for them is there. What we need to do is find out what we can do to take some of the resources and make it available at the local level with the people who are experiencing the problem.

Sixty percent of all the young people who are homeless on the streets of New York have aged out of the foster care system. Yet, 95 percent of all Black parents who apply to adopt these children are turned down by the traditional agencies, who make $2 billion where 80 percent of the money goes for services and salaries.

So that needs to be changed and the Black churches need to be given the license authority in order to make placements of children so that the kind of values that has sustained low-income people in these neighborhoods can be insinuated into the policy apparatus so that we can begin to see some genuine change.

Again, Senator, I'd like to emphasize, answers to exist among the people experiencing the problems. But we tend to ignore this indigenous resource and continue to parachute solutions in designed by well-meaning people, but not people who share the same ZIP Codes as those experiencing the problem.

And as a consequence, we will continue this cruel bait and switch game where we all cite statistics of students who are being shot to death on the streets and then we use them as the basis of remedies. But when the remedies are forthcoming, they benefit the people whose children are not at risk.

When I was on a recent talk show with the head of the Urban League, I was asked by the host, Jim Lehrer, Mr. Woodson, what is the state of Black America?

I said, for folks who are on this panel, life is not bad. Our income has not gone down in the past 20 years, regardless of which White man is in the White House. The destiny of Black America has never been determined by what White America agreed to do. It is a twofold problem. It is a problem, yes. Racial discrimination does exist and we must continue to address it. It is a problem; it is not the most pressing problem, because if racial discrimination were to end tomorrow, the kind of problems faced by low-income Blacks in the inner cities would not disappear. You still cannot go through those drug infested neighborhoods, that we must look within the neighborhood for solutions.

These are the natural antibodies of the neighborhood. We must begin to perhaps transfer some of the resources that are being used for conferences like the kind that some will be experiencing, not myself, over the next 4 days, and perhaps do what the church in Summit, NJ, has done under Buster Sorres.

He's taken $2,100 raised by the Black church to take 91 youngsters in public housing in their neighborhood for a 2- or 3-day camping trip where alliances can be established between responsible Black men and these youngsters for $2,100. This to me is a more responsible use of resources than to send two men to this conference where they would expend the same amount of money at a cocktail party, at a banquet, to discuss the crisis of the African-American male. To me, Senator, to continue this is to dance on the graves of these fallen youth. And it seems to me that we have got to bring an end to it and really seek solutions where they truly exist—among the experts in the neighborhoods. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Woodson. Dr. Franklin, we'd be pleased to hear from you now.

[The complete prepared statement of Robert Woodson follows:]

STATEMENT OF ROBERT WOODSON, PRESIDENT
NATIONAL CENTER FOR NEIGHBORHOOD ENTERPRISE
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Mr. Woodson: Thank you, Senator. I would like to thank you for giving me this opportunity.

My testimony will be from the perspective of those communities that experience the problems.

I think if we are to reach some useful conclusions, it's important for this Committee to state the issue clearly, and I have not heard it stated clearly.

Just as all Black people do not look alike, walk alike, and think alike, we all do not suffer alike, and I think it distorts the issue when we describe the situation of "Black people" as an aggregate, saying for instance, that the income of Black Americans is only 54 percent of that of White Americans. This merges the income of the panelists here with that of a Black person working in a restaurant washing dishes. And that does a disservice to those who are truly struggling economically.

If in reviewing the statistics we disaggregate the population, we will find that in the past 20 years, Black families with incomes of $35,000, grew from 15.7 to 21.2 percent and Black families with incomes of $50,000 increased 350 percent, while Black families at the bottom making less than $10,000 rose from 26.8% to 30.2%. In fact, the income gap between low-income Blacks and upper-income Blacks is greater than the income gap between Whites and Blacks. For the past 20 years, those who talked about Black males in crisis have been engaged in a cruel bait and switch game. All Black men are not in crisis. The sons of the panelists sitting in this room are not Black men in crisis. They're in private schools. They go to the best universities. They have strong families behind them. They're not going to be out mugging even if they drop out of college.

It is important to distinguish between that group of Blacks and those Blacks in the inner city who are living in public housing or in communities that are truly at risk. It is the situation of the latter that should be our concern.

In an article written by William Raspberry, who was a reporter at that time in 1959, he quoted a civil rights leader of that day who commented that poor Blacks were not benefiting from the gains of the civil rights movement, that they have problems that extend beyond race, and that continued emphasis on race-specific solutions would never address their problems, which were fundamentally economic.

Yet, we ignored that fact and even now continue to press for race-specific solutions that have benefitted only those Blacks who were prepared to walk through the doors of opportunity once they were opened.

We now have a situation in which Blacks control eight of the 12 major cities in the U. S., yet many of the poor Blacks in those cities are no better off than they were when the city was controlled by Whites. The solution is not simply to change the race or sex of the ruler; the rules of the game must be changed.

We cannot claim that discrimination is the sole cause of the demise of the Black community. In 1959, 78 percent of all Black families were whole. Earlier, in the face of a depression, when there was massive unemployment, Black families remained strong, even when we were being lynched every day. Even when we were denied the opportunity to vote, we maintained strong households. In 1959, less than 2 percent of Black children were raised in households where the mother never married. However, during the last 30 years, since the passage of civil rights legislation and the initiation of a host of poverty programs, all that has changed. We must ask ourselves, have Blacks been the unintended victims of the helping hand? It's important to understand why the dissolution of many Black families and communities occurred in such a short time.

A section of Durham, North Carolina had been called "Black Wall Street" until the '60s because it had been a mecca of Black economic and social development in that city. Not one of the hundred Black businesses located there went under as a consequence of the depression. And yet, within just two years of urban renewal, a hundred Black businesses were eliminated, 600 Black households disintegrated, 70 acres were flattened and 50 continue to remain flat. As a consequence of such programs, many people have been displaced.

In the past 25 years our nation has expended $1 trillion in programs to aid the poor through programs of the federal, state and local governments. Twenty-five years ago, 70 cents of every dollar designated to help the poor went directly to those in need. Today, 70 cents of every dollar goes to those who serve poor people in what I call the Poverty Pentagon. Only 30 cents of every dollar ever reaches those communities that are in crisis. Those programs have been initiated and directed under the guidance of a host of "experts" -- people with degrees and credentials to validate their opinion, but, sadly, with little firsthand experience of the problems they are called to solve.

We must recognize that the real experts are not at this table. The real experts -- those who have lived side-by-side with the people whom they serve, and those with proven records of success -- will not be attending a conference over the next four days on Blacks in crisis where the registration fee is $350, where attendance at a banquet is $300, and where the hotel costs are $87.

When a conference that purports to address the problems of the Black male in crisis charges those fees it virtually eliminates the participation of the most effective community leaders. Rather than have a panel of Ph.D.'s come together to bemoan the failures of Black communities, we should acknowledge the successes within our low-income neighborhoods and present them as models to be followed. The National Center for Neighborhood Enterprise and many of its colleagues throughout the nation recognize that there are indigenous healing agents within these communities. One of these is Officer W. W. Johnson from Washington, D.C. who has been profiled on national television and recognized in a column by Bill Raspberry for his part in the transformation of the life of Elijah Harris, a Black youth who was caught up in the drug trade when he was 16 years old. Elijah had been through the school system. It had failed him. The social service system failed him. Psychiatrists, counselors, and many other professionals failed him.

W. W. Johnson was called to arrest the boy, but continued communication with him and eventually took him into his home. Elijah had been a straight F student, but things changed with Johnson's support. He was just a tenth of a point from making the honor roll a few weeks ago before he was gunned down on the streets and died.

W. W. Johnson is joined by other heroes such as Kent Amos, whose home provides a safe house to 50 children in his community, and Kimi Gray in far Northeast D.C., a woman abandoned by her husband at age 19 with five children on welfare, who got off welfare in three years and sent all five of her kids to college. She later set up an organization through which 680 other kids from her public housing project went to college. Another of these heroes is Alice Harris from Los Angeles, who transformed the lives of gang youths.

These are the people who share the same zip code with the kids experiencing the problems. They have demonstrated that they can reach out and change the self-perception and alter the conduct and the value choices that these young people make. It is these people who are struggling to change those crime-ridden neighborhoods, who have demonstrated that they really are the experts and that they have the capacity to dramatically change the lives of our young people. Most of them are not founded. They're not the kind of people who are called to come before a Senate committee to give testimony. They were not called to give presentations at the conference on the future of African American males. In fact, most of the speakers at that conference were Ph.D.s. I'm not trying to depreciate their credentials, but I think we need to tap the wisdom of those who have been effective in bringing change, because these are very critical issues.

John Jacobs, God bless him, Dorothy Height, and all the other people who have been here for a long time, as well as the scholars who have studied the problems, do not have children who are in crisis. We need to bring to the table people from these neighborhoods who have demonstrated that they can change the value choices of our children.

What do I recommend specifically?

First of all, we need to abandon the failure studies that characterize most of the social science research and we should instead make federal dollars available to find out how 50 percent of Black families in low-income communities are raising young men who are not dropping out of school, who are not becoming teen fathers, who are graduating from school and living productive lives. We need to know why and how they are achieving against the odds.

Secondly, we should establish what Kent Amos and others have called safe houses. Schools that are being abandoned could be renovated so that they could be utilized by volunteers such as W. W. Johnson who would bring young people in every day after school, offering them a place to do homework, receive a good meal, and, in general, take refuge. Satellite homes could be established in those communities in the households of families who are already successfully raising their own boys and girls. This would enable kids who require more custodial care to stay in a safe home, yet remain in their neighborhoods where they could continue a relationship with their parents. Even drug-addicted parents have some parental instincts which can be tapped to support those young people. We should support such a system and direct our resources to those who are working within their communities to solve the problems.

Another area of concern should be our foster care system. Many of tomorrow's criminals are being incubated in the foster care system where young people at risk are not receiving the personal care they desperately need. Yet, a study which incorporated personal interviews with 3000 Black households showed that 30 percent of all those questioned expressed an interest in taking young people into their homes. The universe of this study represents an 80 percent sample size.

The will and the capacity to accept these youngsters and provide a refuge for them exists. We must bring into play all those who are willing to help and we must make our resources available to people who are working at a local level.

Sixty percent of all the young people who are homeless on the streets of New York have aged out of the foster care system. Yet, 95 percent of all Black parents who apply to adopt children are turned down by the traditional agencies, who spend 80 percent of their funding on administration and salaries.

That system must be changed, and Black churches should be given the authority to facilitate the placement of children. If the values that have sustained low-income people in these neighborhoods can be incorporated into the policy apparatus, we may, at last, begin to see some genuine change.

Again, Senator, I'd like to emphasize that answers do exist among the people experiencing the problems. But we tend to ignore the indigenous resources and continue to parachute solutions in designed by those who may be well intentioned, but who do not live in those neighborhoods and do not truly understand their problems.

We must call a halt to the cruel bait and switch game in which statistics of young people who are shot to death on the streets are cited and then used to justify "remedies" which mainly benefit the people whose children are not at risk.

I was recently on a talk show with the head of the Urban League. The host asked, "Mr. Woodson, what is the state of Black America?" I answered, "For folks who are on this panel, life is not bad. Our income has not gone down in the past 20 years, regardless of which White man is in the White House." The destiny of Black America has never been determined by what White America agreed to do, because the problem is two-fold. Racial discrimination does exist and we must continue to address it. It is a problem, but it is not the most pressing problem. If racial discrimination were to end tomorrow, the problems faced by low-income Blacks in the inner cities would not disappear. You still would not be able to go through those drug-infested neighborhoods.

We must look within the neighborhood for solutions, and recognize the natural antibodies of the community. We must begin to perhaps redirect some of the resources that are being used for conferences such as that which some of today's speakers, not myself, will be experiencing over the next four days, and transfer them to projects such as that of Buster Soaries in Summit, New Jersey. He has used $2100 raised by his church to take 91 children from a public housing neighborhood on a two- or three-day camping trip where alliances can be established between responsible Black men and these youngsters. This to me, is a more responsible use of resources than sending two men to a conference where they would spend the same amount of money at a cocktail party and a banquet, discussing the crisis of the African American male. To me, Senator, to continue this socializing is to dance on the graves of our fallen youth. We have to seriously seek solutions where they truly exist -- among the experts in the neighborhoods. Thank you.

Exploding the Myths...
Robert L. Woodson

The first step in any effort to solve the problems faced by "Black Males in America" is to recognize that the spectrum of this group is very broad. At the far end of this range are low-income young people whose "problems" are life threatening. These are not the black students who were incensed that their credentials were questioned in a recent law-school journal. These are the young men throughout the U.S. whose slaughter is now relegated to the back pages of newspapers because gang- and drug-related murders are considered to be nothing new and have lost their shock value as front-page news items. It is to these who are most critically in need to whom we should direct our energy, our attention, and our resources.

The second step in developing a solution to the problems faced by our low-income youth is to evaluate the limits of "experts'" opinions and diagnosis. For throughout the last twenty five years, as the ranks of policy theoreticians have swelled and more than one trillion dollars have been poured into government programs to help the poor, the rates of crime, murder, and in general, wasted lives have sky rocketed in our inner cities. That should tell us something about the impotency of our traditional strategies for dealing with the problems of the underclass. In effect, a bevy of experts have conceived and constructed a multitude of life support systems and tubed them onto a patient whose very system rejects them. What these physicians of society have failed to realize is that their patient, the black community, does not have to be sustained synthetically and that within the body of the community itself lie the antibodies and elements necessary to bring healing and growth, if only they are allowed to function naturally.

Numerous studies which have focused on success rather than failure in our inner cities have highlighted a host of quiet heros, people who have had a clear and lasting impact on youngsters that countless projects and programs could do nothing to help. These individuals include the likes of Kent Amos of Washington D.C., who literally opened his home to the youth of his neighborhood, offering a sense of identity, a feeling of self-worth, and a stimulus for academic achievement to young people who were formerly at risk. Also among these ranks is "gang mother" Falaka Fattah of Philadelphia, who literally transformed young gang members into a household, and later into an entire community, of goal-oriented energetic young men. Another of these heros is W.W. Johnson, a D.C. police officer who could not simply walk away from a teenager that he was called to subdue, but continued communication and visits with the youth, ultimately taking him into his home. Johnson was able to nurture the heart and hopes of the fourteen-year-old, giving him the confidence to pull out of a web of drugs and crime and even to guide other youngsters to follow his transformation.

All of the above efforts have worked where government policies have failed because they reach a most basic and natural need within our troubled youths--the need to be recognized for their individual value, and the need for consistent and personal investment from another human being. The people who have offered that care and concern are not aberrations. A recent poll of 3,000 black families in Southeast D.C. indicated that over 30% were willing to take youngsters into their households.

If we are serious about safeguarding the destiny of our youth, we must recognize and support these resources that are indigenous to their communities and are even now reaching out to help them.

## STATEMENT OF DR. JOHN HOPE FRANKLIN, PROFESSOR EMERITUS, DUKE UNIVERSITY, DURHAM, NC

Dr. **Franklin**. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I'm grateful for the opportunity that you have given me to meet with you and to discuss briefly one of the major social problems of our time.

First, let me apologize for not having been here in March as I was invited to be because what I have to say is in part the result of my having been an historian for so many years and I will seek to give some background that would have been more in place at that time.

The **Chairman**. Could I interrupt just for a moment and ask you to pull the mike just a little closer? You can just move that microphone toward you.

Dr. **Franklin**. Sure.

The **Chairman**. I want people in the back of the room to hear you.

Dr. **Franklin**. Yes, Mr. Chairman.

My name is John Hope Franklin. I am the John Matthews Manly Distinguished Service Professor of History Emeritus of the University of Chicago and the James B. Duke Professor of History Emeritus at Duke University, and I am currently professor of Legal History at the Duke University Law School.

I apologize for having a Ph.D. degree. [Laughter.]

For more than 55 years, I have taught and written extensively on the history of the United States, the history of the South, and African-American history.

Few problems have been so persistent, so impervious to change, as those facing African-American males in the United States. The problems are as old as the New World settlements, and they are deeply embedded in the history, tradition, and ethos of our Nation.

Not only were the early settlers and the Founding Fathers persuaded that blacks were inferior to whites and thus were unworthy to share equally in the blessings of equality under the Constitution, but every succeeding generation of white Americans has been carefully and skillfully catechized regarding their own responsibility in maintaining a superior position of whites over blacks.

Northern whites as well as southern whites share this view. And in their writings, sermons and public utterances, their leaders tenaciously drove home the point that whites were not obliged to accord equality to blacks who were, after all, hopelessly and irretrievably inferior.

The burden of the freedmen in making the transition to post-Civil War conditions was made more difficult by the grudging manner in which most white Americans conceded that blacks were actually free. This was compounded, of course, by the violence—aptly called by Allen Trelease The White Terror—that prevailed in the South in the last quarter of the 19th century, and that was generally accepted by northern whites who were willing to trade for southern profits any scruples they might have regarding violence or even racial injustice.

During these years, the task of holding the family together and providing a decent future for our children was a major preoccupation of the freedmen. This objective continued into the 20th century. A significant component in this objective was the determination to afford new opportunities for their daughters to secure an education that would place them beyond the reach of White men, who had exploited Black females for two centuries and were primarily responsible for the more than 10 percent of the population that was classified in 1860 as mullatoes, a mere fraction of that racially mixed population, all of whom were designated as Negro.

The best way to relieve their daughters of this ignominy, Black male parents reasoned, would be to see to it that they obtained an education that would give them the independence not merely to just say no, but also to live beyond the arena where compromised situations were unthinkable.

The Black father was resolved to give his daughter the independence to control her own destiny. The education of sons was not nearly as important, not only because they were men and could hopefully make their way in the maze of prejudice and discrimination, but also because the sons could make a livelihood for themselves and their families on the farm or in the new urban opportunities in industry and commerce.

In any case, the Black male could have a reasonable chance of making it even in a hostile environment, thus leaving open to his sister more promising prospects.

My own mother is an example of this turn of events. Born in west Tennessee in 1878, her father decided that she should go as far as possible in the area of education, while her brothers were expected to work on the farm and, later, to secure jobs in the urban centers.

That is precisely what happened. Mollie Lee Parker went to Roger Williams University, where she graduated from the teacher training program and in the process, met and married Buck Colbert Franklin. She was to become a fiercely independent, resourceful teacher who instilled in her own children not only respect for the law, but also a commitment to seeing to it that the law worked for them and for all mankind.

What a miserable end we have come to as regards the status of Black males in American society. We began this century with the widespread and virtually complete disfranchisement of Black males—women were, of course, of no political consequence until the ratification of the 19th amendment in 1920.

As we progressed into the 20th century, the condition of Black males steadily deteriorated. First, they became the specific objects of hate and recrimination in the race riots of the 20th century—the one in Atlanta in 1906, the one in Springfield, IL, in 1908, those in Chicago, Washington, Longview, TX, Omaha, NE, and Elaine, AR, in 1919, and those in Tulsa, OK, my own hometown, Detroit, New York City, Los Angeles, Rochester, and other centers in later years.

Second, Black males fell victim to discrimination in industrial employment as they sought to make the transition from rural to urban America.

Third, they suffered new setbacks as opportunities for employment dwindled in peacetime America, as structural unemployment appeared in the wake of new technology and as one backlash after another insisted on an inferior, subordinate place for Black males in American life.

If we desire to know the consequences of this state of affairs, we need look no further than the findings of Jewelle Taylor Gibbs, who is present this morning and who has written extensively on this subject, and which I shall not explore. I did not know that she was going to be here. I certainly was determined that you should have the advantage of her findings.

So I will let her give you those findings.

But one of the most dismaying factors is that for young Black males, education would not always result in a meaningful improvement in their position in life. In 1982, Black males in the Northeast and in the southern regions of the United States who attended college had higher rates of unemployment than did White residents in those same regions who did not complete high school.

Although many economists refer to this disparity as an unexplained variance, we are reminded by Gibbs and others that when all other factors have been accounted for, Black male unemployment is most likely the result of a simple factor of employer discrimination.

And at every level, whether it's at college, the graduate school, the professional school, or in ordinary employment, Black males suffer as a result of that discrimination.

Now if young Black males cannot get an education, and if with education they cannot get jobs because of discrimination, they will be less likely to marry and more likely to become fathers of children out of wedlock, with all the attendant problems, including the breakdown of the nuclear family, the expansion of the welfare rolls, and significant increases in the cost of the welfare bureaucracy.

In the absence of employment, the temptation to enter the underground economy would be great, with implications that trafficking in drugs and engaging in other illegal activities will provide status in an alternative role structure.

Small wonder that the number of Black males in penal institutions in the United States is greater than the number of Black males in institutions of higher education. This is a sad commentary on the capacity of the greatest democracy in the world, to establish and maintain an educational and economic system that will make it possible for the least favored members of society to have a secure and healthy future.

Unfortunately, our colleges and universities seem to be interested primarily in the Black athlete, who can somehow remain eligible for 4 years in which to entertain the student body and the alumni boosters.

This state of affairs raises serious questions about the mission of the university. And what in the world will happen to the mass of young Black males who have no hope of completing secondary school, no hope of finding employment of any kind?

That seems to be about where we are as we wind down to the final years before the close of the century. By the time the new century dawns, we shall be compelled to confront the critical problems which we and previous generations should have faced.

If we wait any longer, I'm not sanguine about the outcome. It is not unlike the song being sung in jest these days in the corridors of law schools, and certainly in the one in which I teach. The song goes: "By the year 2000, there will be one million lawyers. How much can a po' nation stand?"

How much can this Nation stand if it fails or is unable to utilize a major human resource when it is obviously in need of all the resources it can muster? How much of a burden can this Nation bear in supporting young Black men on welfare, in prison, or on some other form of public subvention?

Surely there is a better way for this country to face the problem of Black males than to let them fulfill the claim of those who have insisted for three centuries that African Americans have no manhood future in this country.

Surely there is a better way than to deny African-American males equal educational and economic opportunity in a land of plenty, where immigration laws have been relaxed to admit more foreign born and where public responsibility for human well-being has always been a promise more generally made than specifically assumed.

Surely there is a better way to utilize the full potential of this very important human resource than by building more prisons and speeding up the processes that lead to their early incarceration.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to suggest a few approaches that I believe would lead to a more positive and a more healthy public policy, one that is more in keeping with the spirit of what this country is supposed to do and supposed to be.

First, I would urge a thorough reexamination of our educational system, with a view not only to making it much more accessible, but also to providing many new opportunities and experiences in keeping with the needs and requirements of our ever changing economy.

There was a time when a young man could move to the city and without much education could secure a decent living working in a steel mill, a meat packing plant, or an automobile factory.

For a variety of reasons, such jobs either no longer exist or have been drastically reduced in numbers. The present counterpart of the Black male of the 1930's and 1940's is left without opportunities to match his limited training. He must therefore be educated to understand the enormous changes that are continuing in the workplace and he must be trained to serve effectively in the new, highly technical industries that have replaced the older, outmoded sources of employment.

There is not much evidence that we are ready or willing to take the drastic steps necessary to reorder our educational system, but such steps are necessary and without them, we will be mired in a kind of educational backwater.

Second, we must recognize the fact that if a colorblind society is an ideal to which we aspire, we are not anywhere near that ideal at this time.

In 1985, the unemployment rate of Black males ages 16 to 19 soared to more than 50 percent, while the rate for Whites for the same age was less than 15 percent. Black workers in the early

1980's earned less than White workers in every meaningful classification, whether by age, education, sex, or occupation.

A few days ago, all of us read the report of the Urban Institute that said that employers in Washington and Chicago were three times as likely to offer jobs to White male candidates than to similarly qualified Blacks.

The implications of these data are that it is not enough to address the problem of education and training in order to afford equal employment opportunities for African Americans.

The public and private sectors must themselves be much more actively engaged in seeing to it that equal employment opportunity is an important, realizable goal.

Under the circumstances, therefore, it is patently absurd to talk about a colorblind society. Not only have we lived under the shadow of a biracial society, with all the trappings and institutions of two worlds of race, but we have evaluated much of our social progress in terms of achievements along racial and ethnic lines.

There is no such thing as a colorblind society, so long as we have Black history month, Black Awareness Week, and some stated period of time during which we should be civilized to each other. There is no such thing as a colorblind society so long as we are distressed that most of the men on death row are Black, and that the criminal justice system tilts against those—read Black—who do not understand their rights, who do not have adequate defense counsel, if they have any at all, and whose chances of conviction, and even of execution for an alleged capital crime, are far greater because they are Black.

In the third place, our leaders in every sector, at every level, must recognize the plight of the Black male for the grave and critical problem that it is. If we can shift our allegiance to the United Nations at any time it suits our purposes, and turn our back on it when it does not serve our interests, we should have no difficulty in supporting equal employment opportunity, in rallying to the cause of equal justice under the law, and even in championing the rights of all persons regardless of color, if such a course of action is called for in order to create a healthy environment and a decent community in which all of us can live in peace and prosperity.

Mr. Chairman, our Federal Government, in its unamended Constitution, in various judicial interpretations of the Constitution, and in numerous acts of the Congress, has shown itself to be a highly color conscious establishment.

In recognizing this indisputable fact, it is very fitting for the Congress to take steps toward the realization of a colorblind society that so many of our leaders have so vigorously advocated. This involves not mere words, however eloquent and powerful. It involves legislation to correct the previously conscious efforts to preserve the two worlds of race, separate and unequal.

We need a civil rights bill that guarantees and protects those objectives that honest, well-intentioned citizens can reasonably expect. Persons seeking the protection that equal justice promises should not be exposed to the risks that the civil rights bill of 1866 was designed to protect, but to which they were once again exposed in the Supreme Court decision in Patterson against the McLean Credit Union and other similar decisions.

Nor should individual employees be required to prove intentional discrimination in the face of palpable acts on the part of employers that are in themselves clearly discriminatory.

Nor should it be possible to get away with labeling proposed legislation a quotas bill simply because someone with a veto power pulls that term out of a hatful of political tricks and pins that label on a bill he does not like, or because in exploiting the fear and apprehensions of a segment of the voters, it will make good campaign material in the next election.

It is particularly unseemly for the Federal Government, especially the executive branch, to seek to prevent an honest effort of the private sector to reach practical solutions in cooperation with employees leading to equal employment opportunity that will remove this issue from the political arena once and for all.

Finally, we need a generous infusion of capital to improve housing, so that people can live like civilized human beings instead of like animals in substandard housing or on the streets.

The idea of many hundreds of thousands of such people in the United States, many of whom are Black males, is so repulsive in a Nation that claims to be the richest in the world, and indeed, the most powerful, that one prefers not to dwell on it.

We need an enlightened war on drugs where the emphasis is on controlling the importation and distribution, as well as on education and treatment.

The cost to our society of drug trafficking and its use can hardly be estimated. And while the drug lords reap great profits, our people, especially Black males in urban America, are the most tragically exploited.

I am not impressed with suggestions that fiscal restraints place major limitations on our capacity to deal with these problems. If we can spend billions on space exploration, we can spend what is needed to overhaul our public educational system. If we can spend $1 billion a day on what has been rather theatrically described as Operation Desert Storm, we can spend $1 billion a month to rebuild our cities, to repair our dilapidated infrastructure that would provide employment for many thousands and spend whatever is necessary to save a generation of Black males and others from the scourge of disease, drugs, despair, and crime.

And I hope that this Congress, Mr. Chairman, will confront these problems and apply to them all the wisdom and resources necessary for their solution.

This Nation has the means and indeed, the skills, necessary to solve the problems that plague our society. I would also hope that it has the will.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Dr. Franklin.

Dr. Gibbs, we'll now hear from you. Pull that mike right up close, too, if you could.

[The complete statement of John Hope Franklin follows:]

Summary

## African American Males in Urban America
by John Hope Franklin

African American males have experienced problems for three centuries. Their inferiority was argued by white supremacists during slavery and in freedom.

To protect African American females from exploitation by white males, parents educated them, often at the expense of the African American males.

In the twentieth century black males suffered disfranchisement, terrorism of various kinds, and discrimination socially and in the workplace.

Urbanization did not ease their misery but, in many ways, exacerbated it.

Welfare rolls expanded, the nuclear family began to break down, unemployment grew, and many took refuge in the underground economy.

To halt the descent and to reverse these trends, several things should be done:

There should be a thorough reexamination and reorganization of the system of public education.

We should recognize the fact that our society is not color-blind and measures should be taken recognizing that simple fact.

We must recognize the plight of the black male for the grave and critical problem that it is.

We need a new civil rights bill that addresses the need to provide equal employment opportunity.

We need to understand that discrimination persists and that legislation cannot be avoided by the specious claim that it will produce quotas in employment.

The problem is so urgent that it cannot be successfully argued that fiscal constraints require us to make only modest moves in confronting the problem.

The richest nation on earth and the only superpower can certainly afford to expend whatever is necessary to preserve and protect a great human resource in the black male.

# AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES IN URBAN AMERICA

Testimony of Professor John Hope Franklin Before
The Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and
Urban Affairs, May 21, 1991

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee: I am grateful to you for giving me this opportunity to meet with you and to discuss briefly one of the major social problems of our time. My name is John Hope Franklin. I am the John Matthews Manly Distinguished Service Professor of History Emeritus of the University of Chicago, the James B. Duke Professor of History Emeritus of Duke University, and am currently Professor of Legal History at the Duke University Law School. For more than fifty-five years I have taught and written extensively in the history of the United States, the history of the South, and African American History.

Few problems have been so persistent, so impervious to change as those facing African American males in the United States. The problems are as old as the New World settlements, and they are deeply imbedded in the history, traditions, and ethos of our nation. Not only were the early settlers and the Founding Fathers persuaded that blacks were inferior to whites and thus were unworthy to share equally in the blessings of equality under the Constitution, but every succeeding generation of white Americans has been carefully and skillfully catechized regarding their own responsibility in maintaining the superior position of whites over blacks. Northern whites as well as Southern whites shared this view, and in their writings, sermons, and public utterances their leaders tenaciously drove home the point that whites were not obliged to accord equality to blacks who were, after all, hopelessly and irretrievably inferior.

The burden on the freedmen in making the transition to post-Civil War conditions was made more difficult by the grudging manner in which most white Americans conceded that blacks were actually free. This was compounded, of course, by the violence -- aptly called by Allen Trelease _The White Terror_ -- that prevailed in the South in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and that was generally accepted by Northern whites, who were willing to trade for Southern profits any scruples they might have regarding violence or even racial injustice.

During these years the task of holding the family together and providing a decent future for their children was a major preoccupation of the freedmen. This objective continued into the twentieth century. A significant component in this objective was the determination to afford new opportunities for their daughters to secure an education that would place them beyond the reach of white men who had exploited black females for two centuries and were primarily responsible for the more than ten percent of the population that was classified in 1860 as mullatoes, a mere fraction of the racially-mixed population, all of whom were designated as Negro.

The best way to relieve their daughters of this ignominy, black male parents reasoned, would be to see to it that they obtained an education that would give them the independence not merely to "just say no" but also to live beyond the arena where compromised situations were unthinkable. The black father was resolved to give his daughter the independence to control her own destiny. The education of sons was not nearly as important, not only because they were men and could, hopefully, make their way in the maze of prejudice and discrimination, but also because the sons could make a livelihood for themselves and their families on the farm or in the new urban opportunities in industry and commerce. In any case, the black male could have a reasonable chance of making it even in a hostile environment, thus leaving open to his sister more promising prospects.

My own mother is an example of this turn of events. Born in west Tennessee in 1878, her father decided that she should go as far as possible in the area of education, while her brothers were expected to work on the farm and, later, to secure jobs in the urban centers. That is precisely what happened. Mollie Lee Parker went to Roger Williams University, where she graduated from the Teacher Training Program and in the process, met and married Buck Colbert Franklin. She was to become a fiercely independent, resourceful teacher who instilled in her own children not only respect for the law but also a commitment to seeing to it that the law worked for them and for all mankind.

What a miserable end we have come to as regards the status of black males in American society. We began this century with the widespread and virtually complete disfranchisement of black males. (Women were, of course, of no political consequence until the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920.) As we progressed into the twentieth century, the condition of black males steadily deteriorated. First, they became the specific objects of hate and recrimination in the race riots of the twentieth century -- the one in Atlanta in 1906, the one in Springfield, Illinois in 1908, those in Chicago, Washington, Longview, Texas, Omaha, Nebraska, and Elaine, Arkansas in 1919, and those in Tulsa, Detroit, New York City, Los Angeles, Rochester, and other centers in later years. Secondly, they fell victim to discrimination in industrial employment as they sought to make the transition from rural to urban America. Third, they suffered new setbacks, as opportunities for employment dwindled in peace time America, as structural unemployment appeared in the wake of new technology, and as one backlash after another insisted on an inferior, subordinate place for black males in American life.

If we desire to know the consequences of this state of affairs, we need look no further than the findings of Professor Jewelle Taylor Gibbs. She tells us that there is a dark, discouraging, forbidding portrait in the miserably deficient education of young black males, their poor health, their tragic morbidity, their sad family status, their dismal employment prospects, and the public policy implications of their lowly status. Secondly, we get a picture, made more vivid upon reflection, of brutal and heartless discrimination that extends back in the history of black people for more than three hundred years. This is accompanied by the remarkably insensitive refusal on the part of the majority of the white people of the United States to concede the most elementary rights of equality to persons outside their own racial group. Thirdly, we see that the disadvantaged position of young black males -- and others, too -- is perpetuated by those who cling to outmoded, antediluvian views regarding the racial inferiority of blacks and their inability to function successfully in a highly competitive social and economic order.

One of the most dismaying factors is that for young black males, education does not always result in a meaningful improvement in their position in life. In 1982, black males in the northeast and southern regions of the United States who attended college had *higher* rates of unemployment than did white residents in those same regions *who did not complete high school*. Although many economists refer to this disparity as an "unexplained variance," Gibbs reminds us that when all other factors have been accounted for, black male unemployment is most likely the result of a simple factor of employer discrimination. The scenario that Gibbs paints is one in which the entire social structure suffers when society fails to treat black youth as potentially valuable members of society. If the schools continue to fail them, the nation will not have a sufficient pool of educated manpower for a highly skilled labor force. Consequently, the economy will not be able to maintain its competitive edge if employers continue to reject them; and the social security system will be unable to support the growing number of elderly citizens who are, incidentally, predominantly white. The persistence of racial discrimination in the workplace was confirmed just last week in a special study conducted by the Urban Institute, which found that the same old patterns persist -- the withholding of information on employment opportunities from black applicants, the refusal to grant interviews to black applicants, and setting up barriers of one kind or another that place them at a serious disadvantage.

If young black males cannot get an education, and if, with education, they cannot get jobs because of discrimination, they will be less likely to marry and more likely to become fathers of children out of wedlock, with all the attendant problems, including the breakdown of the nuclear family, the expansion of the welfare rolls, and significant increases in the cost of the welfare bureaucracy. In the absence of employment, the temptation to enter the underground economy will be great, with implications that trafficking in drugs and engaging in other illegal activities will provide status in an alternative role structure. Small wonder that the number of black males in penal institutions in the United States is greater than the number of black males in institutions of higher education. That is a sad commentary on the capacity of the greatest democracy in the world to establish and maintain an educational and economic system that will make it possible for the least favored members of society to have a secure and healthy future.

Unfortunately, our colleges and universities seem to be interested primarily in the black athlete who can, somehow, remain eligible for four years in which to entertain the student body and the alumnni boosters. This state of affairs raises serious questions about the mission of the university. And what in the world will happen to the mass of young black males who have no hope of completing secondary school and no hope of finding employment of any kind? That seems to be about where we are as we wind down the final years before the close of the century. By the time the new century dawns, we shall be compelled to confront the critical problems which we and previous generations should have faced. If we wait any longer, I am not sanguine about the outcome. It is not unlike the song being sung in jest these days, in the corridors of law schools: "By the year 2000 thate'll be one million lawyers, how much can a po' nation stand?" How much can this nation stand if it fails or is unable to utilize a major human resource when it is obviously in need of all the resources it can muster? How much of a burden can this nation bear in supporting several young black men on welfare, in prison, or on some other form of public subvention?

Surely there is a better way for this country to face the problem of black males than to let them fulfill the claim of those who have insisted for three centuries that African Americans have no manhood future in this country. Surely there is a better way than to deny African American males equal educational and economic opportunity in a land of plenty, where immigration laws have been relaxed to admit more foreign-born and where public responsibility for human well-being has always been a promise more generally made than specifically assumed. Surely there is a better way to utilize the full potential of this very important human resource than by building more prisons and speeding up the processes that lead to their early incarceration. Mr. Chairman, I would like to suggest a few approaches that, I believe, would lead to a more positive and a more healthy public policy, one that is more in keeping with the spirit of what this country is supposed to be and to do.

First, I would urge a thorough reexamination of our educational system with a view not only to making it much more accessible, but also to providing many new opportunities and experiences in keeping with the needs and requirements of our ever-changing economy. There was a time when a young man could move to the city and, without much education, could secure a decent living working in a steel mill, a meat packing plant, or an automobile factory. For a variety of reasons, such jobs either no longer exist or have been drastically reduced in numbers. The present counterpart of the black male of the nineteen thirties and forties is left without opportunities to match his limited training. He must, therefore, be educated to understand the enormous changes that are continuing in the work place, and he must be trained to serve effectively in the new, highly technical industries that have replaced the older, outmoded sources of employment. There is not much evidence that we are ready or willing to take the drastic steps necessary to reorder our educational system, but such steps are necessary and without them we will be mired in a kind of educational backwater.

Secondly, we must recognize the fact that if a color-blind society is an ideal to which we aspire, we are not anywhere near that ideal at this time. In 1985 the unemployment rate of black males, ages 16-19, soared to more than 50 percent, while the rate for whites of the same age was less than 15 percent. Black workers in the early nineteen eighties earned less than white workers in every meaningful classification, whether by age, education, sex, or occupation. And a few days ago the Urban Institute reported that employers in Washington and Chicago were three times as likely to offer jobs to white male candidates than to similarly qualified blacks. The implications of these data are that it is not enough to address the question of education and training in order to afford equal employment opportunities for African Americans. The public and private sectors must be much more actively engaged in seeing to it that equal employment opportunity is an important realizable goal.

Under the circumstances it is patently absurd to talk about a color-blind society. Not only have we lived under the shadow of a biracial society, with all the trappings and institutions of two worlds of race, but we have evaluated much of our social "progress" in terms of achievements along racial or ethnic lines. There is no such thing as a color-blind society so long as we have black history month, black awareness week, and some stated period of time during which we should be civilized to each other. There is no such thing as a color-blind society so long as we are distressed that most of the men on death row are black, and that the criminal justice system tilts against those -- read black -- who do not understand their rights, who do not have adequate defense counsel, if they have any at all, and whose chances of conviction and even of execution for an alleged capital crime, are far greater because they are black.

In the third place, our leaders in every sector, at every level, must recognize the plight of the black male for the grave and critical problem that it is. If we can shift our allegiance to the United Nations at any time it suits our purposes, and turn our back on it when it does not serve our interests, we should have no difficulty in supporting equal employment opportunity, in rallying to the cause of equal justice under the law, and even in championing the rights of all persons regardless of color, if such a course of action is called for in order to create a healthy environment and a decent community in which all of us can live in peace and prosperity.

Mr. Chairman, our federal government, in its unamended Constitution, in various judicial interpretations of the Constitution, and in numerous acts of the Congress, has shown itself to be a highly color-conscious establishment. In recognizing this indisputable fact, it is very fitting for it to take steps toward the realization of a color-blind society that so many of our leaders have so vigorously advocated. This involves more than mere words, however eloquent and powerful. It involves legislation to correct the previously conscious efforts to preserve the two worlds of race, separate and unequal. We need a civil rights bill that guarantees and protects those objectives that honest, well-intentioned citizens can reasonably expect. Persons seeking the protection that equal justice promises should not be exposed to the risks that the Civil Rights Bill of 1866 was designed to protect, but to which they were once again exposed in the Supreme Court decision in Patterson v. the McClean Credit Union. Nor should individual employees be required to prove intentional discrimination in the face of palpable acts on the part of employers that are in themselves clearly discriminatory. Nor should it be possible to get away with labeling proposed legislation a "quotas bill" simply because someone with the veto power pulls that term out of a hat full of political tricks, and pins that label on a bill he does not like, or because in exploiting the fears and apprehensions of a segment of voters it will make good campaign material in the next election. It is particularly unseemly for the federal government, especially the executive branch, to seek to prevent an honest effort of the private sector to reach practical solutions, in cooperation with employees, leading to equal employment opportunity, that will remove this issue from the political arena once and for all.

Finally, we need a generous infusion of capital to improve housing so that people can live like civilized human beings, instead of like animals in sub-standard housing or on the streets. The idea of many hundreds of thousands of such people in the United States, many of whom are black males, is so repulsive in a nation that claims to be the richest in the world and indeed the most powerful, that one prefers not to dwell on it. We need an enlightened war on drugs where the emphasis is on controlling the importation and distribution as well as on education and treatment. The costs to our society of drug trafficking and use can hardly be estimated. And while the drug lords reap great profits, our people -- especially black males in urban America -- are the most tragically exploited of all.

I am not impressed with suggestions that fiscal constraints place major limitations on our capacity to deal with these problems. If we can spend billions on space exploration, we can spend what is needed to overhaul our public education system. If we can spend a billion dollars a day on what has been rather theatrically described as Operation Desert Storm, we can spend a billion dollars a month to rebuild our inner cities, to repair our dilapidated infrastructure, that would provide employment for many thousands, and spend whatever is necessary to save a generation of black males and others from the scourge of drugs, disease, despair, and crime. I hope that this Congress will confront these problems and apply to them all the wisdom and resources necessary for their solution. This nation has the means and, indeed, the skills necessary to solve the problems that plague our society. I would also hope that it has the will. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

## STATEMENT OF DR. JEWELLE TAYLOR GIBBS, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

Dr. GIBBS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and good morning to you and to the Senators who have just left.

Much of the previous testimony actually has pre-empted some of what I had planned to say. However, as a woman, I am accustomed to this position and I will continue with my comments.

My name is Jewelle Taylor Gibbs. I am a clinical psychologist and currently an associate professor at the School of Social Welfare at the University of California at Berkeley.

As the editor and major contributor to the book, "Young, Black and Male in America: An Endangered Species," which was published in 1988, I appreciate this opportunity to present testimony concerning the problematic status of young Black males in America.

And I do want to emphasize that I am going to be talking about those who are the most disadvantaged, those in the inner cities, and I do want to say that actually, the majority of young Black males between the ages of 15 and 25 in America are doing fairly well in spite of all the media images.

So my testimony will focus on those who are low-income and predominantly in the inner cities.

My book presents compelling evidence that these young Black males in America's inner cities are in fact an endangered species, constantly threatened with physical, psychological, or social annihilation. They have been miseducated by the educational system, mislabeled by the criminal justice system, mistreated by the social welfare system, and mislabeled also by the mental health system.

Nearly three decades after the march on Washington in 1963, the status of these young Black males in the age group 15 to 24 has actually deteriorated on most significant social and economic measures. As conditions have worsened for these youth, they have grown increasingly angry and alienated from the dominant culture.

Today, I would like to briefly focus on three self-destructive behaviors which dramatize the problems of these young Black males, to suggest the major factors which have contributed to their plight, and to propose several policy and program initiatives to address these problems. These three self-destructive behaviors are: crime and delinquency, suicide, and homicide.

First, crime and delinquency are rampant in the inner cities, with Black youth accounting for nearly one-third of juvenile arrests for felony offenses, yet they represent only one-fifth of the youth population.

Contrary to public perception, most victims of these crimes, as has been earlier pointed out, are Black, so that the victimizers and the victims are both poor and Black.

A recent report indicates that one of every four young Black males aged 20 to 29 are involved in the criminal justice system, in jail, on probation, or on parole. However, researchers have found that Black youth are in fact more likely to be arrested, prosecuted, convicted, and incarcerated than White youths who commit similar offenses.

A recent study by the National Center for Juvenile Justice reported that minority juvenile offenders in drug cases were prosecuted in much greater numbers than their White counterparts.

Our Nation is spending billions to construct more prisons to warehouse these young Black and other minority and low-income youths; yet, the prohibitive average cost of $30,000 in the State of California to incarcerate one prisoner for 1 year, primarily serves to punish rather than to rehabilitate these young men.

If that same amount of money were spent for the Job Corps, at least two young people could receive job training in that same 1 year and return to the community as productive, law-abiding and, I might add, tax-paying citizens.

Second, homicide is the leading cause of death among young Black males. In 1977 alone, more young Black males died from homicides than were killed during the 10 years of the Vietnam War. A young Black male has a 1 in 21 chance of being murdered before he reaches the age of 21, primarily by a gun fired by another young Black male. Young Black males are 6 times as likely as young White males to be victims of homicide.

A recent report by the Centers for Disease Control revealed that the homicide rate for Black youths in this age group increased by two-thirds in just 4 years between 1984 and 1988, and it is rising fastest in the age group of 15 to 19. This is a public health problem of major proportions, yet has been virtually ignored at the national level.

These high homicide rates are also related to the increasing violence associated with the drug trade in the inner cities. Yet, for many Black males whose unemployment rates were 3 times higher in 1990 than they were in 1960, selling drugs is frequently viewed as their only source of employment and income.

Third, we come to suicide. And suicide is the third leading cause of death for young Black males. Traditionally, by the way, Black people did not kill themselves. They were too religious.

Since 1960, suicide rates have nearly tripled for young Black males and they have doubled for Black females. While suicide among Whites increases with age, it is a very interesting phenomenon that for Blacks, the highest rates are in the younger group.

We call this the new morbidity. It is a term coined to describe these unacceptably high youth death rates from diseases or life threatening behaviors caused by social rather than biological factors. And it is particularly applicable to young Black males.

The new morbidity also encompasses the increase in alcohol-related disorders, venereal diseases and high risk behaviors which result in decimating this population. As Senator Riegle earlier mentioned, they have very high death rates.

The mortality rate of young Black males is so high, that it has caused a decline in the life expectancy for all Blacks. We are the only group whose life expectancy did not increase in the last decade. In fact, the life expectancy rate has declined for 4 consecutive years for Black people in America.

So that it is 69.2 years for Blacks and 75.6 years for Whites as of 1988. And many Black males die, as do other Blacks, prematurely from 12 major preventable diseases.

I believe there are four major factors to explain how these problems developed and why they have worsened in less than three decades.

Most of these have been stated earlier and I'll just try to be brief.

First, structural and technological changes in the society have shifted the economy from an agricultural and manufacturing base to a service and high technology base, which requires a more highly skilled and educated labor force.

Moreover, these jobs have moved from the industrial East and Midwest to the Sun Belt and other parts of the country where Black youth cannot follow and they do not have the skills to qualify for many of these jobs. Without accessible and legitimate employment opportunities, these youth have developed an underground economy in drugs, stolen goods, and gambling.

The second factor is poverty. As we all know, nearly one-third of all Black families in America live below the poverty line and half of all Black children are born in poverty and will spend all of their youth, the first 18 years of their lives, living in poverty.

A third factor is the growth of the Black female headed household. And as we have heard earlier, these approximate almost half of all Black families. In 1988, half of all Black children under 18 did live in female headed families. Two of every three children in Black female headed households are poor.

These children grow up, Senators, in improverished families. These children frequently live in substandard housing. They attend inferior schools. They lack access to adequate health care and they are exposed at early ages to drugs, crime and violence in their neighborhoods.

Studies suggest in fact that Black males in these families are particularly at risk for social problems, behavioral dysfunctions and psychological despair, partly because of the lack of a male role model in their houses.

The fourth and final factor is the increasingly conservative political climate which, as Dr. Franklin, my eminent colleague, has mentioned, has fostered a backlash to civil rights advances and affirmative action programs in employment and education. Just in the past year, we have seen a number of anticivil rights decisions by the Supreme Court, an attack on affirmative action by the Bush administration, a veto of the 1990 civil rights bill, and in early December 1990, an assault on college scholarships for minority students by the Department of Education.

The rising expectations for Black youths in the 1960's have been replaced by the dashed hopes of Black youth in the 1980's. The national debate has shifted from a proactive emphasis on policies of prevention and early intervention to a reactive emphasis on policies of retrenchment and rehabilitation.

The combination of all these factors has resulted in an escalating cycle of disadvantage, dysfunction, and despair. Efforts to reverse these trends have failed because they have not been carefully conceptualized, planned or implemented, with a few exceptions, such as Head Start and the Job Corps. These fragmented policies and these piecemeal programs have not been effective primarily because they have failed to recognize the interrelationship and the complexity of the problems and the need for a comprehensive and well-coordinated network of services.

And now I will put on my hat as a professor of the school of social welfare.

What can be done on a national level about the problems of young Black males?

I believe, first of all, our Federal Government can begin by developing a set of family assistance policies to achieve three major social goals. First of all, we need to improve income supports for poor families and children. We need to increase the self-sufficiency of welfare recipients through education and employment training programs to get them off of welfare. And we need to provide adequate social services, health care, and housing to strengthen family functioning.

Such policies would significantly improve the status of low-income Black families and other families, thus creating more stable and nurturant environments for the socialization of Black youth.

What are some of the other major areas that we need to target?

The educational system must be radically restructured to meet the needs of Black and other minority youth. Priority areas of change include increased funding for early children programs such as Head Start, which is a successful program, Chapter 1, compensatory education programs, improved vocational educational programs for those young people who will not go to colleges, improvement in the quality of educational programs and facilities in our urban schools, improvement in the recruitment and training of teachers with a special focus on increasing the pool of minority teachers, and development of innovative dropout prevention programs.

In 1987, the Committee for Educational Development reported that for each $1 spent to prevent educational failure, $4.75 would be saved in future cost for remedial education, welfare, and crime.

I think that's a good return on one's investment.

Yet, the Head Start program reaches only 17 percent of all eligible low-income children in this Nation.

Second, we need to have employment and training programs which should concentrate on the hardcore unemployed and unskilled youth through such programs as the Job Corps, the Youth Conservation Corps, VISTA, and other kinds of programs. These successful programs must include a range of services, including remedial education, instruction in basic skills, counseling, health care, and even transportation subsidies so these young people can get to the jobs.

Advocates of the Job Corps point out that each $1 spent on a training slot will return $1.46 in taxes within 2 years from a youth who would otherwise be unemployed, another return on a preventive investment.

Delinquency and substance abuse, I believe, are inextricably tied to school failure and unemployment. Thus, primary prevention of these problems is rooted in increasing educational and employment opportunities for Black males.

Increased funding is needed for innovative prevention and early intervention projects authorized by the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act, as well as improved efforts to coordinate existing programs which serve those at risk youth in the child welfare system, the juvenile justice system, the mental health and special education systems.

To reduce rates of homicide and violent crime—and I do want to emphasize this—a strong and enforceable gun control policy must be adopted at all levels of government to prevent easy access to handguns, Uzi machineguns, et cetera.

Senators, in just the last week alone, we saw two 12-year-old young Black males, one in Atlanta, GA, and one in Oakland, CA, use guns allegedly to murder other children, other Black children, and they had easy access to those guns.

Drug education and prevention programs should be linked to AIDS education and prevention through community-based clinics. Comprehensive health clinics should also be established in the junior and senior high schools in order to provide Black youth with a wide range of accessible and affordable health and mental health services, including family planning, counseling and crisis intervention.

Many Black youths have never seen a family doctor, so they have undetected hearing, vision, and chronic medical problems. Sick children cannot learn easily.

As I close, solving these problems is no longer a matter of conscience, choice, or political affiliation. It is a demographic imperative and a public policy priority for four compelling reasons.

First, Black youth will constitute about one-fifth of the labor force in the early 21st century, 10 years away. So the Nation's productivity and economic stability will depend on their ability and employability.

Second, the solvency of the Social Security system for support of an aging, primarily White, population in the mid-21st century will depend heavily on the contributions of a youthful, non-White population who are gainfully employed.

And I'm sure that many of us in this room need to begin to worry about that Social Security system.

Third, if this society does not invest in preventive policies and programs, it will allocate far more of its resources to maintain punitive programs of increasing police services, building more prisons, treating more addicts, and tolerating unacceptable levels of community violence.

Fourth, the growing urban underclass is a threat to the political and social stability of this Nation, as it creates a wider gap between the haves and the have-nots. It increases the tax burden of welfare programs and it provides a fertile breeding ground for drugs, crime, and violence, which affects all of us in the long run.

Government programs alone, and I agree with one of the previous speakers, are not sufficient to reverse the deteriorating status of young Black males. Cooperative efforts should be developed among all the major social institutions, businesses, professional organizations, Black churches and civic organizations, and community-based organizations to develop programs to enhance family functioning, to promote educational and employment opportunities, and to prevent life threatening behaviors among Black youths.

The social, economic, and moral fabric of this Nation is slowly being eroded by the high cost of discrimination, the waste of human resources, and the escalation of violence and fear in our urban areas.

If Black youths are given real opportunities for education, if they are provided with meaningful jobs, if they have adequate income to care for their families, and if they have hope for future mobility, I believe that they then will act responsibly and will contribute their fair share to the larger community.

Senators, in America, we do have the knowledge, we do have the technology, and we do have the resources to improve life chances for these young Black males. What we need in this country is the compassion, the commitment, and the political consensus to create a humane environment not only for Black youth, but for all youth in America.

Then, and only then, will the promise of American democracy be fulfilled for all of its citizens.

Thank you.

[The complete statement of Jewelle Taylor Gibbs follows:]

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May 13, 1991

TO: Honorable Members
Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs
United States Senate

FROM: Jewelle Taylor Gibbs, Ph.D.

RE: Testimony for Hearing on Black Males

Good morning. My name is Jewelle Taylor Gibbs. I am a clinical psychologist and currently an Associate Professor at the School of Social Welfare at the University of California at Berkeley, California. As the editor and major contributor to the book Young, Black and Male in America: An Endangered Species (Auburn House, 1988), I appreciate this opportunity to present testimony concerning the problematic status of young black males in America.

I have presented compelling evidence in my book that young black males in America's inner cities are an "endangered species," constantly threatened with physical, psychological, or social annihilation. They have been miseducated by the educational system, mishandled by the criminal justice system, mislabeled by the mental health system and mistreated by the social welfare system. Nearly three decades after the March on Washington in 1963, the status of black males, 15-24, has actually deteriorated on most significant social and economic measures. As conditions have worsened for these youth, they have grown increasingly angry and alienated from the dominant culture.

Today I would like to focus briefly on three self-destructive behaviors which dramatize the problems of these young males, suggest the major factors which have contributed to their plight, and propose several policy and program initiatives to address these problems. These three self-destructive behaviors are: crime and delinquency, suicide and homicide.

First, crime and delinquency are rampant in the inner cities, with black youth accounting for nearly one-third of juvenile arrests for felony offenses, yet they represent only one-fifth of the youth population. Contrary to public perception, most victims of these crimes are black, so that the victimizers and the victims are both poor and black. A recent report indicates that one of every four black males, ages 20-29, are involved in the criminal justice system, in jail, on probation, or on parole. However, researchers have found that black youth are more likely to be arrested, prosecuted, convicted and incarcerated than white youth who commit similar offenses. A recent study by the National Center for Juvenile Justice reported that minority juvenile offenders in drug cases were prosecuted in much greater numbers than their white counterparts.

Our nation is spending billions to construct more prisons to warehouse black and other minority and low-income youth, yet the prohibitive average cost of $30,000 to incarcerate one prisoner for one year primarily serves to punish rather than to rehabilitate these young men. If that same amount of money were spent for the Job Corps, two youth could receive job training in one year and return to the community as productive law-abiding citizens.

Second, homicide is the leading cause of death among young black males. In 1977 alone, more died from homicide (5,734) than were killed during the 10 years of the Vietnam War (5,640). A young black male has a 1 in 21 chance of being murdered before he reaches 21, primarily by a gun fired by another black male. Young black males are six times as likely as young white males to be victims of homicide. A recent report by the Centers for Disease Control revealed that the homicide rate for black youth, 15-24, increased by two-thirds between 1984-1988, rising faster among the 15-19 age group. This is a public health problem of major proportions, yet has been virtually ignored at the national level.

These high homicide rates are also related to the increasing violence associated with the drug trade in the inner cities. Yet for many black males, whose unemployment rates were three times higher in 1990 than they were in 1960, selling drugs is frequently viewed as their only source of employment and income.

Suicide is the third leading cause of death for young black males. Since 1960, suicide rates have nearly tripled for young black males, and doubled for black females. While suicide among whites increases with age, it is a peculiarly youthful phenomenon among blacks.

The "new morbidity," a term coined to describe these unacceptably high youth death rates from diseases or life-threatening behaviors caused by social rather than biological factors, is particularly applicable to young black males. It also encompasses the increase in alcohol-related disorders, venereal diseases, and high-risk behaviors which result in decimating this population. The mortality rate of young black males is so high that it has caused a decline in the life expectancy rate for all blacks, the only group whose life expectancy did not increase in the last decade. In fact, the life expectancy rate has declined for 4 consecutive years and was 69.2% years for blacks and 75.6 for whites in 1988. Many black males die prematurely from 12 major preventable diseases.

There are four major factors to explain how these problems developed and why they have worsened in less than three decades. First, structural and technological changes in the society have shifted the economy from an agricultural and manufacturing base to a service and high technology base, which requires a more highly skilled and educated labor force. Moreover, as these new jobs have increasingly moved from city to suburbs and from East to West, urban black youth have had neither the skills nor the mobility to qualify or to compete for them. Without accessible and legitimate employment opportunities, these youth have developed an underground economy in drugs, stolen goods, and gambling.

The second factor is poverty. Nearly one-third of all black families in America live below the poverty line and half of all black children are born in poverty and will spend all of their youth growing up in poor families.

A third factor is the growth of black female-headed families, which increased from 22% in 1960 to 48% in 1988. In 1988, half of all black children under 18 lived in female-headed families. Two of every three children in black female-headed households are poor. Growing up in impoverished families, these children frequently live in sub-standard housing, attend inferior schools, lack access to adequate health care, and are exposed at early ages to drugs, crime and violence in their neighborhoods. Studies suggest that black males in these families are particularly at risk for social problems, behavioral dysfunction, and psychological despair.

The fourth and final factor is the increasingly conservative political climate which has fostered a backlash to civil rights advances and affirmative action programs in employment and education. Just in the past year we have seen a number of anti-civil rights decisions by the Supreme Court, an attack on affirmative action by the Business Administration, a veto by Bush of the 1990 Civil Rights Bill and in early December 1990, an assault on college scholarship for minority students by the Department of Education. The rising expectations for black youth in the 1960's have been replaced by the dashed hopes of black youth in the 1980's. The national debate has shifted from a proactive emphasis on policies of prevention and early intervention to a reactive emphasis on policies of retrenchment and rehabilitation.

The combination of all these factors has resulted in an escalating cycle of disadvantage, dysfunction and despair. Efforts to reverse these trends have failed because they have not been carefully conceptualized, planned, or implemented with a few exceptions such as Head Start and the Job Corps. Fragmented policies and piecemeal programs have not been effective because they have failed to recognize the interrelationship and the complexity of the problems and the need for a comprehensive and well-coordinated network of services.

What can be done on a national level about the problems of young black males? Our government can begin by developing a set of family assistance policies to achieve three major social goals: to improve income supports for poor families and children, to increase the self-sufficiency of welfare recipients through education and employment training programs, and to provide adequate social services, health care and housing to strengthen family functioning. Such policies would significantly improve the status of low-income black families, thus creating more stable and nurturant environments for the socialization of black youth. What are some of the major areas to be targeted for black youth?

The educational system must be radically restructured to meet the needs of black youth. Priority areas of change include increased funding for early childhood programs, compensatory education, and improved vocational education programs; improvement in the quality of educational programs and facilities for urban schools; improvement in the recruitment and training of teachers, with a special focus on increasing the pool of minority teachers; and development and financing of innovative drop-out prevention programs. In 1987 the Committee for Educational Development reported that, for each dollar spent to prevent educational failure, $4.75 would be saved in future costs for remedial education, welfare and crime. Yet the Head Start program reaches only 17% of all eligible children, fewer than one out of five who could benefit.

Employment and training programs should concentrate on the hardcore unemployed and unskilled youth through such programs as the Job Corps, the Youth Conservation Corps and the Private Industry Council school-to-work transition programs for those students who are not college-bound. Successful programs must include a range of services, including remedial education, instruction in basic skills, counseling, health care, and transportation subsidies. Advocates of the Job Corps pointed out that each dollar spent on a training slot will return $1.46 in taxes within two years from a youth who would otherwise be unemployed.

Delinquency and substance abuse are inextricably tied to school failure and unemployment, thus primary prevention of these problems is rooted in increasing educational and employment opportunities for black males. Increased funding is needed for innovative prevention and early intervention projects authorized by the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act, a well as improved efforts to coordinate existing programs which serve "at risk" youth in the child welfare, juvenile justice, mental health and special education systems.

To reduce rates of homicide and violent crime, a strong and enforceable gun control policy must be adopted at all levels of government to prevent easy access to handguns, Uzi machine guns, etc. Drug education and prevention programs should be linked to AIDS education and prevention through community based clinics. Comprehensive health clinics should also be established in the junior and senior high schools in order to provide black youth with a wide range of accessible and affordable health and mental health services, including family planning, counseling, and crisis intervention. Many black youth have never seen a family doctor, so they have undetected hearing, vision, and chronic medical problems. Sick children cannot learn easily.

Solving these problems is no longer a matter of conscience or choice. It is a demographic imperative and a public policy priority for four compelling reasons. First, black youth will constitute about one-fifth of the labor force in the early 21st century, so the nation's productivity and economic stability will depend on their ability and employability. Second, the solvency of the social security system for support an aging white population in the mid 21st century will depend heavily on the contributions of a youthful non-white population who are gainfully employed. Third, if this society does not invest in preventive policies and programs, it will allocate far more of its resources to maintain punitive programs of increasing police services, building more prisons, treating more addicts, and tolerating unacceptable levels of community violence. Fourth, the growing urban underclass is a threat to the political and social stability of this nation as it creates a wider gap between the "haves" and the "have nots," increases the tax burden of welfare programs, and provides a fertile breeding ground for drugs, crime, and violence.

Government programs alone are not sufficient to reverse the deteriorating status of young black males. Cooperative efforts should be developed among all the major social institutions, businesses, professional organizations, churches and civic organizations to develop programs to enhance family functioning, to promote educational and employment opportunities and to prevent life-threatening behaviors among black youth.

The social, economic, and moral fabric of this nation is slowly being eroded by the high costs of discrimination, the waste of human resources, and the escalation of violence and fear in urban areas. If black youth are given real opportunities for education, if they are provided with meaningful jobs, if they have adequate income to care for their families, if they have hope for future mobility, then they will act responsibly and will contribute their fair share to the larger community. In America we have the knowledge, the technology and the resources to improve life chances for young black males. What we need is the compassion, the commitment, and the consensus to create a humane environment, not only for black youth but for all youth in this country. Then, and only then, will the promise of American democracy be fulfilled for all of its citizens.

Biographical note:

Jewelle Taylor Gibbs, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor at the School of Social Welfare, University of California at Berkeley. She is the editor and major contributor of Young, Black, and Male in America: An Endangered Species (Dover, MA: Auburn House Publishing Co., 1988) and the co-author of Children of Color: Psychological Interventions With Minority Youth (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishing Co., 1989).

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## TABLE I

### Black and White Youth Homicide Rates, 15-24 Age Group

(per 100,000 residents)

| 15-24 | 1960 | 1970 | 1980 | 1985 | 1987 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Black Females | 11.9 | 17.7 | 18.4 | 14.2 | 17.7 |
| Black Males | 46.4 | 102.5 | 84.3 | 66.1 | 85.6 |
| White Females | 1.5 | 2.7 | 4.7 | 3.6 | 3.9 |
| White Males | 4.4 | 7.9 | 15.5 | 11.2 | 11.2 |

Source: Health, United 1989. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. National Center for Health Statistics. Hyattsvile, MD, December 1986, DHHS Pub. No. (PHS). 87-1232

## TABLE II

### Black Youth Suicide Rates by Sub-Groups

(per 100,000 residents)

| 15-19 | 1960 | 1965 | 1970 | 1971 | 1975 | 1980 | 1982 | 1986 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Black Females | 1.1 | 2.2 | 2.9 | 3.4 | 1.5 | 1.6 | 1.5 | 2.1 |
| Black Males | 2.9 | 5.1 | 4.7 | 5.0 | 6.1 | 5.6 | 6.2 | 7.1 |
| 20-24 | | | | | | | | |
| Black Females | 1.5 | 3.5 | 4.9 | 6.5 | 5.2 | 3.1 | 2.9 | 2.4 |
| Black Males | 5.8 | 12.3 | 18.7 | 16.1 | 21.1 | 20.0 | 16.0 | 16.0 |

*Source: Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1990 (106th Ed.).

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SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WELFARE    BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA 94720

May 14, 1991

TO: Honorable Members
Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs
United States Senate

FROM: Jewelle Taylor Gibbs, Ph.D.

RE: Summary of Testimony on African-American Males

To the Honorable Members of the U.S. Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs: I am a clinical psychologist, an Associate Professor at the University of California at Berkeley, and the editor of Young, Black and Male in America: An Endangered Species (Auburn House, 1988). My testimony today, drawn largely from the findings of my book, focuses on three self-destructive behaviors which dramatize the problematic status of these young males, identifies major factors contributing to their plight, and proposes several policy and program initiatives to address these problems. These three self-destructive behaviors are: crime and delinquency, suicide and homicide.

Young black males in America's inner cities are an "endangered species," constantly threatened with physical, psychological, or social annihilation. They have been miseducated by the educational system, mishandled by the criminal justice system, mislabeled by the mental health system and mistreated by the social welfare system. Nearly three decades after the March on Washington in 1963, the status of black males, 15-24, has actually deteriorated on most significant social and economic measures. As conditions have worsened for these youth, they have grown increasingly angry and alienated from the dominant culture.

Crime and delinquency are rampant in the inner cities, with black youth accounting for nearly one-third of juvenile arrests for felony offenses, yet they represent only one-fifth of the youth population. A recent report indicates that one of every four black males, ages 20-29, are involved in the criminal justice system, in jail, on probation, or on parole. However, researchers have found that black youth are more likely to be arrested, prosecuted, convicted and incarcerated than white youth who commit similar offenses.

Homicide is the leading cause of death among young black males. A young black male has a 1 in 21 chance of being murdered before he reaches 21, primarily by a gun fired by another black male. Young black males are six times as likely as young white males to be victims of homicide. A recent report by the Centers for Disease Control revealed that the homicide rate for black youth, 15-24, increased by two-thirds between 1984-1988, rising faster among the 15-19 age group. This is a public health problem of major proportions, yet has been virtually ignored at the national policy level.

Suicide is the third leading cause of death for young black males. Since 1960, suicide rates have nearly tripled for young black males, and doubled for black females. While suicide among whites increases with age, it is a peculiarly youthful phenomenon among blacks.

The "new morbidity," a term coined to describe these unacceptably high youth death rates from diseases or life-threatening behaviors caused by social rather than biological factors, is particularly applicable to young black males. It also encompasses the increase in alcohol-related disorders, venereal diseases, and high-risk behaviors which result in decimating this population.

There are four major factors to explain how these problems developed and why they have worsened in less than three decades. First, structural and technological changes in the society have shifted the economy from an agricultural and manufacturing base to a service and high technology base, which requires a more highly skilled and educated labor force. Without accessible and legitimate employment opportunities, these youth have developed an underground economy in drugs, stolen goods, and gambling.

The second factor is poverty. Nearly one-third of all black families in America live below the poverty line and half of all black children are born in poverty and will spend all of their youth growing up in poor families.

A third factor is the growth of black female-headed families, which increased from 22% in 1960 to 48% in 1988. In 1988, half of all black children under 18 lived in female-headed families. Two of every three children in black female-headed households are poor. Growing up in impoverished families, these children frequently live in sub-standard housing, attend inferior schools, lack access to adequate health care, and are exposed at early ages to drugs, crime and violence in their neighborhoods.

The fourth and final factor is the increasingly conservative political climate which has fostered a backlash to civil rights advances and affirmative action programs in employment and education. The rising expectations for black youth in the 1960's have been replaced by the dashed hopes of black youth in the 1980's.

What can be done on a natinoal level about the problems of young black males? Our government can begin by developing a set of family assistance policies to achieve three major social goals: to improve income supports for poor families and children, to increase the self-sufficiency of welfare recipients through education and employment training programs, and to provide adequate social services, health care and housing to strengthen family functioning.

The educational system must be radically restructured to meet the needs of black youth. Priority areas of change include increased funding for early childhood programs, compensatory education, and improved vocational education programs; improvement in the quality of educational programs and facilities for urban schools; improvement in the recruitment and training of teachers, with a special focus on increasing the pool of minority teachers; and development and financing of innovative drop-out prevention programs.

Employment and training programs should concentrate on the hardcore unemployed and unskilled youth through such programs as the Job Corps, the Youth Conservation Corps and the Private Industry Council school-to-work transition programs for those students who are not college-bound. Successful programs must include a range of services, including remedial education, instruction in basic skills, counseling, health care, and transportation subsidies.

Delinquency and substance abuse are inextricably tied to school failure and unemployment, thus primary prevention of these problems is rooted in increasing educational and employment opportunities for black males, not in building more prisons or passing more punitive legislation.

To reduce rates of homicide and violent crime, a strong and enforceable gun control policy must be adopted at all levels of government to prevent easy access to handguns, Uzi machine guns, etc.

Solving these problems is no longer a matter of conscience or choice. It is a demographic imperative and a public policy priority for four compelling reasons. First, black youth will constitute about one-fifth of the labor force in the early 21st century, so the nation's productivity and economic stability will depend on their ability and employability. Second, the solvency of the social security system for support an aging white population in the mid 21st century will depend heavily on the contributions of a youthful non-white population who are gainfully employed. Third, if this society does not invest in *preventive* policies and programs, it will allocate far more of its resources to maintain *punitive* programs of increasing police services, building more prisons, treating more addicts, and tolerating unacceptable levels of community violence. Fourth, the growing urban underclass is a threat to the political and social stability of this nation as it creates a wider gap between the "haves" and the "have nots," increases the tax burden of welfare programs, and provides a fertile breeding ground for drugs, crime, and violence.

Government programs alone are not sufficient to reverse the deteriorating status of young black males. Cooperative efforts should be developed among all the major social institutions, businesses, professional organizations, churches and civic organizations to develop programs to enhance family functioning, to promote educational and employment opportunities and to prevent life-threatening behaviors among black youth.

*Biographical note*:

Jewelle Taylor Gibbs, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor at the School of Social Welfare, University of California at Berkeley. She is the editor and major contributor of *Young, Black, and Male in America: An Endangered Species* (Dover, MA: Auburn House Publishing Co., 1988) and the co-author of *Children of Color: Psychological Interventions With Minority Youth* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishing Co., 1989).

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The **CHAIRMAN**. Thank you very much, Dr. Gibbs.

Let me start with you, if I may, with a question. And it seems to me as we study some of the history and the patterns, and Dr. Franklin touched on this as well as everyone in one manner or another, it sounds to me like there have been periods of our history that even in the face of racial prejudice and inequities of that kind, that Black people in our society, Black males, were doing much better generally speaking than is the case today in terms of job opportunities and economic advancement, and that the trend lines at previous times have been far stronger, far better than they are today.

In fact, it would seem to me that the ones we have today are the worst that we've had in modern times.

. And through it all, you've had the problem of racial discrimination. That's been present in all of its manifestations and forms.

For the moment, setting that aside, it seems to me that our economy is also malfunctioning in a way that is contributing directly, and perhaps it may be the single biggest cause of what have made these trend lines become almost impossible to fathom. They're so perverse and so destructive that they just literally take your breath away when you stop and think about them.

And it strikes me that if that's right, if our economy is malfunctioning, if there are not enough jobs to go around—one of the things that we're seeing now is this issue that's being generated, I think, in large measure for the next Presidential election, as to what happens in the society when there aren't enough jobs to go around and then who gets the job and who gets left out?

And we've seen manifestations of this before, whether the White person is taking the job from the Black person or the Black person is taking the job from the White person, when, in fact, our real problem is there aren't enough jobs to go around.

And in fact, if you have an economic strategy that makes it clear that there are not going to be enough jobs to go around, that makes it certain there is going to be this tension between unemployed workers, whatever their color, whatever their circumstances, over the desperate need to try to get to the job that is available when somebody else is going to miss out because there just aren't enough jobs.

It seems to me as I listen to this, and there are so many things that we need to do, that getting to a full employment policy, I mean, actually having an economic strategy and plan for America that would mean that there was enough work for everybody to do, and certainly, there's the work to be done. We've got our bridges and highways to rebuild. We've got new factories to build. We've got all kinds of products that we need to build in this country. We need to rehabilitate low- and moderate-income housing in the United States. We're closing a lot of our hospitals and our emergency wards in our hospitals because we can't operate them.

In other words, everywhere I look I see work that needs to be done. I see people unemployed who are seeking work, and I don't understand why we can't have an economic plan that allows people to do what they need to do and want to do; namely, to be able to work.

Now, if we had a full employment economy, if we actually could devise and put in place a strategy in America so that there were enough jobs to go around and we weren't struggling over who got left out, how much of these problems that you see now having worsened so much in recent years, how much would that by itself help solve at least a lot of those problems, or turn those trend lines?

What would be your view on that, Dr. Gibbs?

Dr. Gibbs. Well, Senator, let me say, first of all, I am not an economist and one should, even with a Ph.D., not go beyond one's area of expertise.

The Chairman. I haven't found an economist yet with the answer. So maybe we need to get the economic answers from noneconomists.

Dr. Gibbs. Right. Let me reflect on that question, to say, first of all, I think the full employment policy would certainly go very far in terms of employing those Black males and other minority males who are employable.

I think that would be good for the Nation in general.

But in addition to that, we have this other problem of so many young Black males who would even be left out if we had a full employment policy. So there I think we need a number of strategies.

First of all, I think we need to look at this whole employment and labor force issue in what you might say, a macro way, and realize that there are a number of people who really cannot compete in today's market because of the nature of the technology.

So I think we need to, on the one hand, have a full employment policy for those who are employable. On the other hand, I think we also need to work very hard to be able to bring up those other people and give them the training and the skills.

And that goes back to our educational system. The point that I've tried to make in my book is that we can't separate these things into little pieces, that they're all related.

So, first, we need to really improve the education in the inner cities and give people the skills of reading and writing and the basic skills. Get them out of high school, and then we need to have employment training programs for those who are not going to college. We have to have entry level jobs they can do.

Another strategy—I think we really need a Marshall Plan for the inner cities, frankly. I think we really need to invest in the inner cities. We need to create jobs in the inner cities.

The Chairman. We have a Marshall Plan for just about every other country in the world, don't we?

Dr. Gibbs. Just about every country in the world——

The Chairman. Except for our own country.

Dr. Gibbs. As Professor Franklin earlier stated, we have spent billions building up other countries. Eastern Europe is a recent example. We're going into Bangladesh to help them, and certainly we should help countries which have crises.

But it always amazes me how we can always find the money somewhere in our budget——

The Chairman. Right, for somebody else.

Dr. Gibbs. To help everyone else, and we say we don't have the money when it comes to helping the inner cities.

And so I think we have to look at our priorities, and I think we need to begin to, as we say, take care of business in our own country and try to develop our own labor pool because, otherwise, I think America is going to be in very dire trouble in the next 20 years.

We are going to have to compete with Germany and Japan, where 90 percent of their citizens are literate and can do any kind of job that's necessary.

So I think we need to do that and I also think we need to—I would like to see us think about creating economic incentives for people to establish businesses in the inner city, to bring back industry, give them tax incentives to bring back industry to the inner city.

I think there are many things we can do to not only create full employment in the general society, but to really target the inner cities where there are no jobs and where many of the young men do not have job skills.

And I think that those are the two things that have to go hand in hand.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Chairman Riegle?

The CHAIRMAN. Yes.

Mr. ALEXANDER. We continually talk about the need to educate Black people and about Black schools. We also need to educate White America, and in many ways that's more important than educating Black America.

When a young White child goes to school, he or she doesn't see books written by Black women. He or she sees very little about Black American culture. He or she sees Black Americans only as single-dimensional problems.

Indeed, when one talks about the re-education and re-employment of America, one has to also wonder why a glass ceiling initiative by this administration that would give people access to the top of corporations if they're Black, Brown and Asian and female is suddenly abandoned.

We cannot just talk about the people who have all of the problems. That's extraordinarily important. Often when we get into these discussions, we talk about the problems of the have-nots, and ways that the have-nots should solve the problems. Then the hearing goes away and the people who really create the problems go away.

The problem is so often in the heads of White people. It is their perception; it is what they see every time they see a Black person in our society. They see a person whom they think is less than they are. People like you have to face up to that problem. You've been doing some of it and a lot of others have to do it as well. White people have to talk to this.

Now, before Dr. Woodson condemns education——

Mr. WOODSON. I'm not a Ph.D.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Nor am I. But I would be proud of it if I were. And I would be proud of any Black American who got it. And I'm proud of my wife, who's getting one, and I'm proud of my daughter who's getting one. And other Black Americans ought to be proud of anyone who becomes educated in a society that rewards education.

And those who condemn it, ought to think about it.

This is not about whether people try to accomplish and try to do good for themselves. This is about getting our society to utilize its full forces and to get White people—the people who have all the power—to participate.

Look at business in this country: Nondoctor Bob Woodson talks about business in our country. Black Enterprise lists the top 100 corporations in Black America. The total revenues of those corporations is less than MCI alone made last year. That's where Black business stands in this economy. The accumulated wealth of Black families is $4,400 compared to $45,000 for White families.

So when it comes to sending people to school, where should you reach in to get those extra dollars?

We have to get the full participation of White people like you to look at the entire process. To look at how White people can be more helpful, more understanding of the issues, and become educated about the contributions they should make.

Just one other statistic.

White men in this world constitute only 7 percent of this world. So we ought to look at it from that perspective.

The CHAIRMAN. You know, I want to just say, you made the point earlier about the U.S. Senate and that we have no Black Members in the U.S. Senate.

We also in the U.S. Senate today have only 2 women out of 100. I mean, when we think about distribution and the nature of the inequity of opportunity and how the balances are struck, there are some very powerful imbalances there to look at.

I want to pursue what I was asking a moment ago, though, and ask you, Dr. Franklin, as well, when I look at this sharp deterioration in trend lines—I don't even like to use the word because we're talking about powerful, powerful human statistics here and facts.

But what I'm seeing in the data that we're analyzing here shows me that even young Blacks with advanced college degrees—I mean, your point about the lawyers, wondering about what their future is going to be and so forth, but I'm finding that even in that area, the trend lines are worsening.

So you've got not only young people in the inner city who are struggling against impossible odds to try to get on track and have a good future, but even people that are coming through and going all the way through to graduate school seem to be facing a more and more difficult and perverse circumstance.

I'm talking about young Black males now or I assume the same is true, maybe to a somewhat different degree, for Black females coming through, advanced education. And it's causing me to say, because I look across this society and I'm seeing more and more walking wounded all over the place. We're talking about one major part of that today, but the economic system, it seems to me, is malfunctioning. Racial discrimination comes in on top of that as an additional terribly perverse force.

But aren't we seeing the economic system itself consolidating and shrinking in such a way that even people who make a maximum exertion are finding it tougher and tougher to get ahead?

Am I right in that impression or am I missing something in the data that I need to understand better?

Dr. **Franklin**. I think, Mr. Chairman, you are unfortunately right in that assumption.

That is, that even in an economy that is healthy, to say nothing of one that is unhealthy, there persists the perception that somehow Blacks are not entitled to be a part of a healthy economy.

When you have a situation in which, for example, Blacks are brought into an employment picture, given employment opportunities that hitherto might not have been enjoyed, the notion is that somehow, they're not entitled to that or the notion is that they're taking that away from some White person and therefore, that should not happen.

The resistance to the equal economic and educational opportunity becomes more rigid and becomes more powerful and the result is that the strains, the tensions in our society will continue.

The **Chairman**. If there aren't enough jobs for Blacks and for Whites, doesn't that aggravate this underlying tension that we've been coping with and struggling with over all of these years now, centuries?

In other words, if there's an evermore desperate struggle for fewer and fewer jobs all the way up and down the line, doesn't this take and add sort of a crushing additional feature to the prejudice that's all too prevalent in our society, anyway?

And doesn't it lend itself to sort of the fear-mongering and the politicizing of that issue as well, to try and set people against each other?

Dr. **Franklin**. Sure, it does. It does because, Mr. Chairman, those people who are fearful react not to the truth so much as to rumor and gossip, or they react to their notion of what the situation ought to be.

When you have, for example, people assuming that affirmative action will reward persons who don't need to be rewarded or don't deserve to be rewarded, then you have a situation in which the reaction will be hostile, even if the person who receives the job is highly qualified, even superbly qualified.

So that the crunch is there, the crush is there, the tension is there, and the unhealthy climate is created as a result of it.

I think that, first of all, we have a situation even before we realize that there aren't enough jobs.

The **Chairman**. Yes.

Dr. **Franklin**. People react to the employment of a Black person not only on the basis that that person has a job that I ought to have, but that person has a job that he ought not to have, you see?

And then add to that any kind of economic emergency or difficulty which results in the reduction of employment opportunities for everyone, then the scramble for the remaining jobs will of course be much greater and you'll have all kinds of tension and difficulty and problems.

But underlying all that, you see, is this thing I was talking about; namely, that we have been taught for three centuries that Blacks were unworthy. And there's nothing that we can do about that until we reteach American society.

The **Chairman**. Yes.

Dr. **Franklin**. And let me say this—that each and every Black person suffers, whether he's got one Ph.D. or three Ph.D.'s, whether he's the president of this bank or this insurance company. He suffers in the inner climate such as that which is created in this country by people who feel that Blacks, regardless of their condition or their station in life, should become and remain inferior.

And I yield to no person who says that a person of education and of standing or anything else does not suffer. He may not suffer—he may have a meal on the table, but among human beings, there's a greater suffering than starvation. And that's the destruction of the morale, the destruction of the human spirit, the attempt to dehumanize a person because he happens to be Black. And that occurs across the board, whether you are at the top or whether you are at the bottom, whether you're president of a State university who happens to be Black or whether you are in the streets looking for a job.

This country has the talent and the skill to make all of them feel like they're unworthy even to be citizens, to say nothing of enjoying equal opportunity.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, I agree with you and I think that that's a very powerful commentary that you give. And I think what others have said today about the responsibility of the rest of us in society to do something about it—we carry a larger share of the responsibility to get that changed. I mean, there's no question about it. And I see that and I accept that.

I think my colleagues who are here with me today feel the same way. We've got a lot of work to do in that area.

I'm going to yield to Senator Sanford. Before I do, I'm very much of the view that in addition to getting the civil rights act enacted and the host of other things that confront the prejudice and the inequities and the injustice in our Nation, that we have got to have an economic strategy in America where there are enough jobs to go around.

And I'm convinced as I sit here that if we allow ourselves to get caught in a situation which we're now in where the number of jobs are dwindling and the tension and the struggle for too few jobs by too many people lend itself to a worsening of the very problems we're talking about here, the worsening person-by-person, principally for Blacks, but also for Whites, but also, I think, makes it less and less able for us to confront sort of just the racial prejudice issue.

I mean, if you've got a society that's at war with itself and you've got more and more of this deterioration because the economy isn't functioning properly, you can take someone like Mr. Underwood and if he's out jogging in the morning, as noted and as successful as he is, he's as apt to be victimized in a given neighborhood in a given situation, whether by a police officer or somebody else, because we are allowing conditions to fester and worsen in the country driven in additional part by a faltering economic system that plays right into the worst possible outcomes.

It just seems so clear as we think about it, that if you don't get the economy working properly, these trend lines are going to continue to work against us.

I don't see how we turn them around if the economy is driving us to where we don't want to go.

Senator Sanford.

Senator **Sanford**. First, let me say that I have a statement from Senator Shelby, who could not be here. He attended the last hearing, but he's tied up with another committee, as we so often find the situation in the Senate. I do want to put this statement in the record and express his regret for not being here.

The **Chairman**. Without objection, so ordered.

We also have statements from Senators Dixon and Sasser.

**Speech by SENATOR RICHARD SHELBY Date: May 20, 1991**

## Banking Committee Hearing on African-American Males

I would like to welcome the distinguished witnesses who are testifying before this Committee, today. Your remarks will be an invaluable asset to the Commission's work. You are excellent role models for young African-American males who may find themselves limited by environmental factors such as drug-infested neighborhoods, negative peer group pressure, poor housing, poor health care and inadequate education.

Your testimony here represents the beginning of the enormous task facing the Commission in its activities this week. I am sure that your remarks will serve as a beacon to young African-American males throughout this country.

The members of this Commission realize that the objectives we have set are ambitious and cannot be accomplished overnight. Nonetheless, because of the importance of this issue to the survival of the African-American male and to the nation, we must put our best efforts forward in finding solutions for these problems.

It is my hope that the work of this Commission will result in an outpouring of grassroots efforts to address these problems which cannot be resolved by a small group of individuals. I have been encouraged recently to discover that there is such an effort underway in the cities of Huntsville, Madison, and Triana in my state. An organization called COARMM which stands for the Coalition on At Risk Minority Males has been established to address the problems that plague African-American males in Madison County, Alabama.

I plan to work with this group and any other groups attempting to address this important issue. I am hopeful that the advice and recommendations I receive from this hearing and the subsequent Conference will enable me to be more effective in finding solutions to the problems facing young African-American males in my state and throughout the nation.

Again, I want to thank Senator Sanford for inviting me to be a member of the Twenty-First Century Commission on African-American Males. I am very pleased to be a part of the second hearing on this issue in the Senate Banking Committee, and I look forward to the findings of the Commission.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Alan J Dixon

# STATEMENT BY SENATOR ALAN J. DIXON HEARING ON URBAN AMERICA WITH EMPHASIS ON THE PLIGHT OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN MALES

MAY 21, 1991

MR. CHAIRMAN, I AM PLEASED THAT YOU HAVE CALLED THIS SECOND HEARING ON "THE PLIGHT OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN MALES IN URBAN AMERICA."

AT THE FIRST SENATE HEARING ON MARCH 19, 1991, THIS COMMITTEE HEARD ABOUT THE NEWLY CREATED 21ST CENTURY COMMISSION ON AFRICAN-AMERICAN MALES -- ITS PURPOSE AND

GOALS. THE COMMITTEE HEARD FROM A DISTINGUISHED PANEL OF ELECTED OFFICIALS, CIVIC LEADERS, CORPORATE AND FOUNDATION ORGANIZATIONS, AND EDUCATORS.

WE HEARD ABOUT A MAGNITUDE OF PROBLEMS WHICH HINDER THE ADVANCEMENT OF MANY AFRICAN-AMERICAN MALES. WE ALSO HEARD SOME PROPOSED SOLUTIONS WHICH, HOPEFULLY, WILL AID THE COMMISSION AS IT ATTEMPTS TO ACHIEVE A PERMANENT SOLUTION TO, OR SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCE THE MAGNITUDE OF PROBLEMS.

THIS MORNING, I LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING FROM SOME DISTINGUISHED

EXPERTS ON URBAN ISSUES, WHO WILL FOCUS ON RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROPOSED SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED BY AFRICAN-AMERICAN MALES WHICH REQUIRE NATIONAL ATTENTION.

I FEEL CONFIDENT THAT TESTIMONY FROM THESE SENATE HEARINGS, IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE COMMISSION'S THREE-DAY ACTION-ORIENTED CONFERENCE, WHICH IS TO BE HELD LATER THIS WEEK, WILL SERVE AS A FOUNDATION FOR THE COMMISSION AS IT ATTEMPTS TO DEVELOP LONG-TERM SOLUTIONS TO THE PLIGHT OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN MALES IN URBAN AMERICA.

THANK YOU, MR. CHAIRMAN.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR JIM SASSER
COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS
THE PLIGHT OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN MEN IN URBAN AMERICA
MAY 21, 1991

THANK YOU MR. CHAIRMAN FOR HOLDING THIS VERY IMPORTANT HEARING THIS MORNING. I WOULD LIKE TO COMMEND YOU FOR BRINGING TOGETHER THE DISTINGUISHED WITNESSES. I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO RECOGNIZE THE FINE EFFORTS OF SENATOR SANFORD WITH THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY COMMISSION ON AFRICAN-AMERICAN MALES.

THE PROBLEMS AFFLICTING BLACK MALES IN URBAN AMERICA ARE CORROSIVE TO SOCIETY AS A WHOLE. BLACK MALES LOOK AROUND AND DON'T SEE A POSITIVE FUTURE FOR THEMSELVES. THEY SEE UNEMPLOYMENT AND POVERTY, FAMILY DISINTEGRATION, CRIME, INCARCERATION, AND SOMETIMES DEATH. THEY ARE HIT THE HARDEST BY THESE PROBLEMS.

BLACK MALES HAVE SUFFERED THE MOST IN THE CURRENT RECESSION. LAST MONTH, BLACK MALES BETWEEN THE AGES OF 16 AND 19 HAD AN UNEMPLOYMENT RATE OF 38.4 PERCENT WHILE THEIR WHITE COUNTERPARTS WERE UNEMPLOYED AT 16.9 PERCENT. AND THERE ARE NOW MORE COLLEGE AGED BLACK MALES IN JAIL THAN THERE ARE IN AMERICAN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES. IT IS A TRAGEDY ALREADY IN THE MAKING. THESE YOUNG MEN NEED HELP IN JOINING AND CONTRIBUTING TO THE PRODUCTIVE FORCE OF THIS NATION.

I BELIEVE THAT THE POLICIES OF THE DECADE OF THE 1980s HAD A HARMFUL EFFECT ON THE PLIGHT OF BLACK MALES. SPENDING CUTS AND THE ELIMINATION OF SOCIAL PROGRAMS HAVE TAKEN AWAY POSSIBILITIES FOR BLACK MALES FOR SELF-IMPROVEMENT AND GREATER INDEPENDENCE. THERE ARE FEW WAYS OUT FOR BLACK MALES.

FOR MANY BLACK MEN THERE IS SOMETHING LIKE AN IRON CURTAIN BLOCKING THEIR ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITIES. THEY SEE THE POSSIBILITIES THAT ARE THERE FOR THEM AND FROM WHAT THEY CAN SEE, THE BARRIERS SEEM INSURMOUNTABLE. AS A RESULT, THERE IS GREAT FRUSTRATION THAT LEADS TO A SENSE OF HOPELESSNESS.

WITHOUT SUCH BARRIERS, THE SOCIETY COULD FUNCTION FAR BETTER. IF IT WERE INCLUSIVE RATHER THAN EXCLUSIVE, THERE WOULD BE INCENTIVES FOR BLACK MALES TO STAY IN SCHOOL AND REVERSE THE DEBILITATING TRENDS OF FAMILY DISINTEGRATION AND WORK APATHY. THESE PROBLEMS NEED TO BE DEALT WITH OR MORE AND MORE BLACK MEN WILL BE PART OF A "LOST GENERATION".

THANK YOU AGAIN MR. CHAIRMAN.

Senator **Sanford**. And now, I would prefer to turn to Senator Wirth for anything he'd care to say.

## OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR WIRTH

Senator **Wirth**. I thank you very much, Senator Sanford.

Thank you all for being here. It's nice to see my old friend, Jewelle Gibbs and Cliff Alexander and the others of you. I'm sorry I wasn't here earlier. I was in the same hearing with the markup of the energy bill with Senator Shelby.

I think, Mr. Chairman, this hearing and what it represents is profoundly important for the country. If we in a democratic society have increasing numbers of people who do not believe they have any stake in that society, it's very difficult for me to see how we can expect a democratic society to work.

I think that that is absolutely at the root of what it is we're talking about in terms of an ideal and a goal for America, presumably not only encouraging opportunity, which I'm proud that my party has always tried to do, but also having opportunities out there that are recognized and reflected that people feel that they can grasp.

And I look at just in Denver, CO, which is not New York, it's not Chicago, it's not Miami, it's not Los Angeles, it's not San Francisco or Berkeley. It's relatively innocent by comparison. I look at the hopelessness that some of these young people have, particularly the young males. It is an appalling situation. You get a sense of—I hear your frustration, Mr. Chairman, but how do you get your hands around this and how do we reach it?

I make one other comment and then I had just a couple of related questions, if I might. They may have been touched upon and I'm sorry. If they have been, let me know. Just a comment.

You talked, Mr. Chairman, about the job situation and too few jobs and too many people.

This may be difficult to say, but this situation exists not only in the United States, but exists around the world. We are creating a world in which the population is growing incrementally. We're beyond arithmetic. We're into geometric growth of the population.

The economy and the natural resource base just isn't adequate to take care of that job. It's just not adequate to take care of the resources that are going to be necessary if we assume that now 5.5 billion, soon to be 11 billion people, by the end of my children's lifetime, it will be 16 billion people, are going to have the resources for a kind of quality of life and education and job opportunities and housing and health care that's at all reasonable.

And that's another fix on this, Mr. Chairman, that we're pretty smug about the population issue in the United States. We shouldn't be in any way, shape, or form. Every child in the United States uses about 25 times more resources than a child in India or a child in Ghana. That's pretty dramatic. And yet, we say it's their problem, not ours.

It's all around us to think about that other vector on this. And that is only an aside.

Let me ask you, maybe Cliff, if you all brought into this, did you see the Edsell article in the Atlantic last month on race in America?

Mr. ALEXANDER. No, I did not.

Senator WIRTH. Have any of you seen that? I would just recommend it to you. It's a very, very important piece on values. I was going to ask you to react to that. I'd just ask you to look at it. Obviously, there's no point in going there.

I was very struck by it, how deeply rooted this is and how terribly important, how much it goes to what we're about and some of what I just heard you saying, Dr. Franklin.

The other window that I wanted to bring up was the environmental one. We talk about young Blacks in America, young Black males in America living generally in areas that are poorer than richer, with fewer housing opportunities and fewer healthy opportunities and fewer education and job opportunities.

We're also talking about people who tend to live in the plumes of toxic waste dumps, who tend to live downwind of refineries and chemical manufacturing plants, who tend to be in housing where lead is available and kids are exposed to lead, which we know is highly toxic and incredibly damaging.

As we look at this environmental question which gets sort of pushed off by Mr. Sununu and Mr. Darman and people who ought to be leading this country, it is right in our own backyard, and enormously important, the impact that that is having on young people in this country, particularly poor young people in this country who can't move away from it, which a lot of other people do.

We move away from those problems. You can't do it. It is yet another kind of cut on this issue.

I don't know if you all talked about this and had any question about that.

Dr. Gibbs.

Dr. GIBBS. Well, thank you, Senator Wirth. I will say that I think Black people have not been alerted to all of the problems in the environment yet. It is not something that the Black community is aware of. We're becoming more aware of it.

But, for example, several statistics that are really quite troubling.

The main killer of Black children under the age of 6 is asthma, partly because of a number of the substances in the environment and partly because many of their parents can't afford health care.

And, of course, many of the children in the ghetto have various forms of lead poisoning and other kinds of toxic problems and chronic health problems because of the kinds of situations that they have in the inner cities.

One of the proposals that I think is very important is that we do need to do something about health care for the inner cities. And one of the things we might do, the Congress, is to extend the medicaid coverage to families who are currently not covered.

There are many, what we call the working poor, who really don't qualify for medicaid, and yet, can't afford private insurance. One out of every three poor children in this country, many of whom are Black, are uninsured, so their parents cannot get them preventive health care, never take them to the pediatrician or the family doctor. These children are the children who are coming into our schools and, as I said, with many undetected health problems. I did mention that earlier.

And they can't learn. They can't see the board. They can't hear the teacher. They have stomach aches, headaches, backaches.

Nobody even knows they're sick. And one day, they're labeled mentally retarded or emotionally disturbed and they're put in one of those sidetracks and never learn.

So I think part of what really needs to be done to help the people that we're talking about is to guarantee them, besides having a job, and besides having good schools, they really should be guaranteed health care.

As you know, one of the statistics that was reported in the New York Times not too long ago is that males in Harlem have a shorter lifespan than males in Bangladesh. And we've certainly been seeing Bangladesh on TV and how poor Bangladesh is.

So this is really, I think, a very incriminating statistic for the richest country in the world, to have Black people and Black children be so sick and have so little access to health care that they have shorter lifespans than people in Bangladesh.

And I think that the U.S. Senate really should pay attention to this health care issue.

Thank you.

Mr. Woodson. Senator, I do think—if I may.

Senator Wirth. Mr. Woodson.

Mr. Woodson. Nearly the entire discussion for the past 2 hours has looked at these issues through a racial prism. Having been active in the civil rights movement, I would be the last person to deny that race is a problem. It is and continues to be. But I think we do ourselves and this issue a disservice by merely looking at the situation through a racial prism.

The fact of the matter is that Blacks control 8 of the 12 major cities in the United States. Yet, the situation in those cities is no better than where the mayors are white. If you look at where all the Federal Government's development dollars have gone during the past 15 years, you will see that in Los Angeles County, for instance, only 12 cents of every $1 has gone to those neighborhoods that have the environmental problems just spoken of. The rest goes to downtown development, an area in which 40 percent of the buildings are owned by the Japanese.

Washington, DC, is a city that is 70 percent Black. It is our courts that are sending these youngsters to jail, not White people. In Washington, there have been 10 major urban development projects that have used tax dollars and Federal dollars. All of these funds have gone downtown, not in those neighborhoods in the Southeast where Officer W.W. Johnson lives, while scarcely one Black owns a single business in the downtown Washington area. Similar situations are found in Atlanta and Los Angeles.

We have got to begin to ask ourselves, what is it that can be done? We must shift the use of Federal, State and local resources to neighborhoods and areas that experience the most critical problems. In order to do that, something different is required in our thinking. We have to look at Blacks not simply as objects of White largesse, or of public service initiatives, and recognize that the participation of minorities in this economy depends upon their small business formation rates.

We must answer the question Senator Riegle raised earlier, how was it that, even when faced by a depression in the 1930's, Black communities thrived and maintained solid households, up until 1959? When Whites would not allow us into hotels, we created 1,350 inns and hotels, many of them as large as the Sheraton, in some of our major urban areas. When Whites would not loan us money, we established over 200 banks. We had 230 medical schools that were affiliates of our own hospitals. When employment was denied us, we became our own employers. It is important that we acknowledge our rich legacy of self-development. This is not to suggest that to recognize the value of self-development, we must reject all Government assistance.

The Federal Government should play a role. But the Black community could do much to stimulate its own economic growth. For example, 150 Black organizations expend $3 billion every year in this country on facilities for meetings and conferences. If these organizations joined together in clusters of 10 and agreed to have their conferences in one city, they could buy a Hyatt Regency and employ their own people to staff and manage it.

As long as we continue to look for a group of wise White men who are compassionate enough to provide us with the solutions to our problems, we will never address the problems ourselves.

Yes, White America does have a role to play. But its role must be played in tandem with our own efforts. We must join in a partnership to develop solutions. Nobody should do, nor will they do, more for us than we are willing to do for ourselves.

As you noted, Senator, in the past we maintained solid families and a strong moral fiber in the face of racial discrimination. It is wrong to suggest that the reason that we are now acting irresponsibly with regard to ourselves and our families is that Whites aren't supplying us with enough jobs. This is irresponsible testimony.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Senator.

Senator WIRTH. Yes.

Mr. ALEXANDER. If you believe in the tooth fairy, you will believe that Black people alone can solve their problems in this country.

It's patent nonsense.

We ought to talk some sense about that. And sense has to do with this entire country pulling together to solve this issue, not talking about some self-help program. Obviously, people ought to do the best they can. But why are we responsible for all of the self-help when we are negatively perceived by the majority population in our society?

We have to get to the education of White people in America. If your body and the House of Representatives can spend time listening to a queen, couldn't you spend some time hearing Black people and White people talk about this issue?

It would seem to me to be a great idea to have several joint sessions addressing how we can all see to it that Black people stand tall in this society, that Black males are heard from. That would be a great thing to do. I don't know why we can't do that, because it shouldn't just be a few of us talking about it or disagreeing about it. It has to be, again, the people in power doing something about it.

Now let me talk about Washington, DC, for just a second.

Washington, DC, has its problems. It's had an administration with certain problems. But it also has law firms that don't employ Black people.

In 1969 I was the first Black partner in a major White law firm in this city, the first one. That firm today has one Black partner. This is 1991.

Employment in this city has a lot to do with discrimination in America. You can't just expect the people that work in the District government to solve it all. We have the good luck of having a good mayor now. We have the good luck of having fine people in the city council. We have people like you who are interested in trauma care in this city and elsewhere.

But we need the White establishment, the people who run the EEI and all of the other similar institutions, to hire some people who are Black, and promote them, and show an interest in the city. And we need all of the city to pull together.

But continually talking about how Blacks can do it all if they would only restore their sense of morality is nonsense.

The **Chairman**. Mr. Underwood, why don't you go ahead, and then I want to go to Senator Sanford.

Mr. **Underwood**. OK, if I may, Mr. Chairman.

What Bob Woodson says is very important here and we must take care of our own problems within ourselves. And what you say here, sir, is very important also.

Federal intervention does help.

You posed the question earlier to Dr. Gibbs, would an employment policy help? I'm not a politician. Obviously, I'm not a policymaker. I'm not an economist, as you said. But the answer, I believe, is twofold.

First of all, we have to deal with, as you said, sir, the perception of Black America. That's another problem and another battle I'm fighting all the time in Hollywood, putting forth positive images, because that medium is so powerful, television and the big screen.

Second, I think I see the frustration that you have, and Senator D'Amato earlier said, I don't know the answer. And I hear that all the time—we don't have an answer.

But I've heard a number of answers here today from the panel and I think if there's somewhere to focus on, it would have to be however to go about this—I'm not a politician—but a full employment policy. Because what you're dealing with is the psyche of the Black man. I can speak about that as a young Black man.

If someone, especially a Black male in society, feels as though they're contributing something, they're going to feel good about themselves and that's going to take care of the family.

I think your initial question was, would that help? What kind of difference would that make? That would make a huge dent in the problems we're talking about, if we can build that self-esteem somehow.

The **Chairman**. The thing that—well, let me yield to Senator Sanford.

Go ahead.

Senator **Sanford**. Let me ask Blair Underwood just to continue a little bit on how do you, understanding as you do the media and the power of it, suggest that role models might be placed or might be given opportunities to be seen? How do you get that self-esteem generated and working within the Black male?

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Well, first of all, I think that is our problem in the Black community. It must start in the household. It should start with the fathers in the household, as far as that self-esteem.

I take a personal responsibility as a visible young Black man in doing this hearing and the works I do in the projects I continue to do and I have done in the past, to show some of our history, where we've come from and where we can go.

But I think, again, Bob Woodson brought up a good point. I don't believe that he intended to insult the panelists here on our education at all. At least I hope not.

But it's important what we have to contribute. But the point he made, and I think it's very important, is if this committee is sincere about finding a remedy to the situation, and I truly believe you are sincere in finding that, what might be a good idea is to take it to the inner city and talk to those people, those young males who have overcome the odds, in spite of the odds, and that's where you find your role models, in the inner city.

Senator SANFORD. Thank you very much. Again, we appreciate so much your making a special effort to get here.

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Thank you.

Senator SANFORD. Mr. Woodson certainly has made some good points and there's not any question that he's been out there where the problem is.

But I have a little bit of a dangling feeling here about what the city of Washington, what Congress can do to help local neighborhood efforts. Are you suggesting that anything they would do might conceivably make the situation worse?

Mr. WOODSON. Senator, Congress can, as I said, undertake an inventory of what is already working in those neighborhoods and public housing developments.

Senator SANFORD. Well, what would we do with that?

Mr. WOODSON. You could, for example, support the creation of safe houses for youngsters in those communities. Fifty percent of the households in those low-income communities are raising boys and girls successfully. These parents are asking permission to utilize some of the schools that have been closed so that they can extend their care and guidance to other children in the community.

Senator SANFORD. That's a mighty simple thing.

Mr. WOODSON. It is simple, but it's sad that we can't get the support needed to do it.

Senator SANFORD. Yes, but that's a city matter. My question was more directed——

Mr. WOODSON. Congress could act to revamp our welfare system to remove the disincentives that keep low-income people living in public housing from bettering their lives. For instance, at present 30 percent of a household's income must go for their rent. If a man comes into the home and forms a family, his income is added to his wife's and, therefore, their rent goes up. The poor folks living in public housing say that this is a powerful barrier to the formation of families. You can change the policies that you are implementing.

Senator SANFORD. The various disincentives in the welfare program?

Mr. WOODSON. Absolutely. We should look at those.

Senator SANFORD. Let me ask you another question from the congressional point of view.

I don't want to read anything into what you said that you didn't say, but do you think that the civil rights legislation will be of useful benefit to the young people, the teenagers in the urban slums?

Mr. WOODSON. Absolutely not, Senator. I think the civil rights bill and the civil rights agenda in general helps those Blacks who are the sons and daughters of the Cliff Alexanders and the Bob Woodsons and the people on this panel. It helps those who are highly unionized and highly professional.

But if you go into these low-income neighborhoods where Officer Johnson lives and you ask the people what difference the civil rights legislation will make to them, you might be surprised at what they will tell you.

Senator SANFORD. What if I asked one of those same people, what would you think of me if I voted against the civil rights legislation?

Mr. WOODSON. For the people living in the neighborhoods where the prime concerns are drug addicts and the unlivable state of the community, it would be an irrelevant issue.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Senator Sanford, as someone who helped draft the 1964 Civil Rights Act, and as someone who knows a little something about this part of the world, let me say that the Civil Rights Acts in this country help all Americans. All Americans. They protect the rights of all Americans.

They are about discrimination based on color. If your color is White, the laws protect you against discrimination. These no-necks out here keep talking about——

Senator SANFORD. Actually, it has been used in the courts to——

Mr. ALEXANDER. They keep talking about improper reverse discrimination.

Will civil rights legislation help people who are in the "ghetto"? Of course it will. We must stop talking about people who come from the ghetto as if there is some underclass out there that we are all ignoring, and as if only people from some rarefied atmosphere go to your conferences.

People who are affected by civil rights bills are people who go to work every day in American society. If you're talking about equal employment opportunity—protection is in those bills.

Yes, it affects those people. You're darn straight it does. It affects poor White people, too. It affects rich Whites and rich Blacks, too.

But the point is not to divide the have-nots. The point again is how we look at each other and how we perceive each other. And getting over this belief that somehow we in the Black community have the solutions for all of our problems in our own hands and you bear none of the responsibility.

Senator SANFORD. One thing I can say, it always makes a hearing more interesting to have a little bit of controversy and difference of opinion.

I'm glad to be able to bring that out to a degree. We are going to run out of time, Mr. Chairman, and I don't feel that I should go on until the last word has been said. Let me say that the conference on exploding myths and analyzing strategies for the African-American males will take place tomorrow, Thursday, and Friday at the Omni Shoreham Hotel. And as a matter of policy, the conference waives any fees for any organization that requests it and indicates that it's a burden. While I have had little input onto many of the details, I think everyone will find the conference to be most informative and helpful.

I want people to understand that this is a meeting to which the public is invited and people with special interests are urged to attend.

Mr. Chairman, while I've got dozens and dozens of question I'm afraid we are running over our scheduled time. I look forward to reading this transcription. I normally don't care much about reading transcriptions of hearings, but I'm eagerly looking forward to having this printed up.

And I again thank all of you for your participation.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Underwood, let me ask you, you are in a sense, I would guess, the youngest of the Black males at the table.

Mr. UNDERWOOD. I think you're right.

Mr. WOODSON. That's open to debate, Mr. Chairman.

Dr. GIBBS. Young in spirit.

Senator SANFORD. With the possible exception of Dr. Gibbs.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes.

Dr. GIBBS. Thank you. [Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. But being young in years--how old would you be today?

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Twenty-six.

The CHAIRMAN. Twenty-six. So you're experiencing life today in contemporary America, obviously living in the Los Angeles area, and extraordinarily successful in your profession.

But when you're outside your profession, when you're out just doing whatever you do in the course of a day or a week or a month and you're not recognized or seen in your professional capacity, but you're just another person, what do you encounter?

What are you running into in terms of racial stereotyping or the degree to which these problems are manifesting themselves in a way that creates hostility or negative vibrations, or however you want to say it?

I'd be interested in what you're sensing and seeing as somebody who's in that age category today.

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Absolutely. In a word—fear. Young Black men are the most threatening gender or sex in the world. And as a young Black male, before somebody recognizes that that's that guy on "L.A. Law," they see someone that they look down upon. They see someone that they are afraid of.

I walk into an elevator with my baseball cap on—God forbid you have a baseball cap on in Los Angeles and sweats, that's what I love to wear. But when I walk around like that, you walk into an elevator, you see people clutch their purses.

Once I tried to help an elderly White lady across the street. She screamed. She was afraid I was trying to steal from her.

So it's that ingrained perception that the Black man is going to steal, that the Black man is shiftless, that the Black man is lazy, that the Black man is a threat.

The **Chairman**. And you feel that pretty much all the time wherever you go.

Mr. **Underwood**. Absolutely. Every day.

The **Chairman**. Once you're outside your professional identity, you feel the pressure of that alienation and fear all the time.

Mr. **Underwood**. Every day of my life. Flying here, I flew here on first class, as I try to fly most times. But people look at me before they recognize me and they say, well, he must be an athlete or he must be an entertainer.

As a matter of fact, the stewardess said that to me, you must be an entertainer, because there's no way—and that's not only perception, but for the most part, sadly, it's true. That's where most of our high-income role models come from, athletics and show business.

The **Chairman**. Now, it would seem to me that as these worsening statistics that we've talked about in terms of crime and violence and all the other things that we have cited today, are accumulating in the society. And so, through television, people are getting more and more images of young Blacks associated with violence or crime, whether Black-on-Black or whatever the situation is.

And it seems to me that racial stereotyping resulting from that sort of negative trend lines feeds right back over into your life.

Even though you're extraordinarily successful in what you're doing, you end up being stereotyped by these worsening problems which are taking place generally.

And so, it seems to me that, in effect, no one escapes it.

Mr. **Underwood**. Not at all.

The **Chairman**. Nor does the White community escape it. We're victims of it as well.

Mr. **Underwood**. Exactly.

The **Chairman**. Whether we're in part responsible for the instances where racial discrimination and racial attitudes enter into it, we all get victimized. The society loses.

It's a tragedy for the whole country. It's a tragedy of such an epic scale that when you stop and think about it, and you take the numbers category by category—I mean, these death rates, and the fact that you pointed out that you had two 12-year-old people who were killed or doing the killing, I'm not sure that I remember exactly which it was——

Dr. **Gibbs**. Two 12-year-olds had guns and were alleged to have used guns to kill other teenagers.

The **Chairman**. Yes, exactly. We're disconnecting ourselves from ourselves. The society is kind of fractionating off into separate categories.

I know, for example, I saw a statistic the other day that says that we now have more private security guards that are being hired and at work each day than we have public police officers or public security personnel.

In other words, it's just another measure of the way the society is kind of walling itself off and fracturing off into pieces.

The racial attitude problem has been with us a long time, and that has to be worked on in every possible way by all of us. And people like myself carry the largest part of the responsibility to try to change and turn that, as does the President and all of the leaders that we have in our country.

We could spend the whole day talking about that and I have enough passion and feeling about that that I'd like to spend the whole day talking about that alone.

But it seems to me that if we don't have an economic strategy that makes sure that there's enough job opportunity going around, we're destined to have our problems worsen, and that there is no substitute for having an economic strategy that's really designed to make sure that we have enough jobs and that people have an opportunity to be prepared to do those jobs and earn a living from that, and that that's a precondition to any kind of a decent, civilized society.

And that if we don't have that, we're going to unravel one way or the other. And it isn't just going to be Blacks that suffer disproportionately as they now do. There are going to be an awful lot of White people that end up also being victimized by an absence of an economic strategy that's sufficient for our human needs.

It seems to me that we have to demand that that gets put together and that we have to say to whoever is running the Government of this country—I know the other day President Bush went out to the University of Michigan and criticized the Great Society.

I suppose one can find defects with it. But it had wonderful virtue that's missing today. And that is, it had an ethic that everybody in this country mattered and counted and ought to have a chance to live a full and decent life.

And so it was an encompassing view of the country. And it looked past color and it looked to the notion of embracing the whole society.

We've gotten away from that, sadly.

Senator SANFORD. Furthermore, it reduced poverty.

The CHAIRMAN. And it did reduce poverty. In our statistics at that time, in the categories we're looking at today, we were far better and far stronger.

So I would say that anybody that wants to criticize that period has an obligation to produce better results. And until somebody can produce better results with an alternative strategy, I'm not sure how much authenticity and legitimacy attaches to the criticism of what somebody else did.

It seems to me that until we see some commitment and serious commitment to turning these trend lines around, that talk is cheap. It doesn't mean much. It just doesn't mean much.

Yes, you wanted to make a comment.

Dr. GIBBS. Yes, Senator. I did want to say that we have talked on the panel this morning as if there were an either/or strategy and polarities.

Actually, I think it's a both/and strategy. And I do think probably most of us would agree with that.

There are certain things that the Federal and State governments do better than anybody else simply because of the cost. And I certainly would have to say that I agree that we need self-help. I agree with a lot of what Mr. Woodson had said about people helping themselves, being empowered. That was also something that we learned during the 1960's, having neighborhoods try to develop and rehabilitate their own neighborhoods, having people who care about their neighborhoods and their schools, parent involvement.

All of these things are very important. Churches in these neighborhoods should certainly be doing more. We ought to have schools that operate all year round so that the kids will be off the street. We ought to have better recreation.

Those are things that neighborhoods can do and we ought to certainly try to encourage investment in small businesses, as I said earlier, and tax incentives.

But I don't think that we can expect local neighborhoods to take care of, as you said, a national employment policy and create jobs.

The CHAIRMAN. Where does the income come from?

Dr. GIBBS. They don't have the income. We can't build large low-income housing units. They can't create a national health policy and create hospitals.

Those are things that cost millions and billions of dollars.

So what I think we need to do is to have both strategies. We need to have the Federal and State governments creating a Marshall Plan in this country for our inner cities and doing the same things they do in the inner cities that they have done in Eastern Europe and other Third World countries.

And at the same time, we do need to empower people in neighborhoods. We need to encourage people to have pride in their neighborhoods, to have pride in their schools, to rid their communities of drug addicts, et cetera, et cetera.

And I don't think it's a question of values. I mean, I have read some of these articles in these national magazines written primarily by White liberals or conservatives, quite frankly. They're talking about values.

Middle class Black people have the same values as White people. The kinds of people who live in the inner cities also want a job, want a decent home, want a good education for their children. And if they are doing things that are not done by middle class people, it is because sometimes those are the only things that will put bread on their table.

So I think we need to get away from this misconception that low-income people or people who live in the ghettos are any different from any of the rest of us, because when we look at homeless people today on the streets of Washington and San Francisco, many of those are middle class executives now who are living out of their cars because of the economy.

And there but for the grace of God go you and go I.

Thank you.

Mr. ALEXANDER. You know——

The CHAIRMAN. Yes.

Mr. ALEXANDER [continuing]. I guess the reason that I feel so passionate about what you as leaders ought to do is we have so little time to talk to you about this.

I don't need to tell you about poor Black people in America. You know it better than anybody on this panel because you've been in those neighborhoods.

I don't need to tell you about self-help. You know about that.

What I think I need to try and talk to you about is how you can teach, how you can use the bully pulpit that you admit you have to change this country, to change the mindset in this country.

That's what this is all about.

You just heard what Blair talked about and what anybody knows to be a fact in this society. When White people see a young Black man or an old Black man, for that matter, this perception is a negative perception.

If that perception persists, employment problems arise and housing problems arise. It affects how you feel about yourself and your family.

Now, all of you are interested enough to start this. The question is whether you can engage your colleagues to do something about it. And it's not about line 3 in H.R. 1. It is not about that at all. It is about what goes into the heads and minds and thoughts of people in this country.

I gave a speech 10 years ago on the 10 top perceptions White people have about Black people. Invariably, those are negative perceptions. And they're negative perceptions built by television—built by every part of television. They're built in the sports world when the "thinking" people and the ownership are White, and the grunts are Black. In the news world, the "problem" people are the Black people, the people who have all the ideas and glamor, et cetera, are the White people.

In the world of entertainment there are all too few positive images. Most of us are clowns throughout television in the entertainment world.

In this country, Black people watch 10 hours of television per day and White people watch 7 hours. That's what's influencing us all.

I remember being with President Johnson and we were talking about something in the Washington Post and he had three television sets in front of him. He said, you're telling me about the Post while America is watching ABC, CBS, and NBC.

That's where people get their thoughts and that's where ideas are created. And that's where leadership has a chance to talk.

You've heard the statistics. We're supposed to come up with solutions if we can. I'm very pessimistic about solutions because I just don't think White people get it.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, we have to get it. We all have to get it. And we're to a point where either everybody wins or everybody loses. It's just that simple.

We've moved beyond of the prior times when maybe we could afford to have things out of kilter and still do reasonably well as a society. That doesn't work any more. The rest of the world has closed in on us.

And even if somebody isn't decent in terms of their human attitudes or self-interest factor that's now, I think, bearing down on this equation that's really changed the equation. And this downward spiral that we're in right now, that all these statistics show that has to be broken. We've got to break that downward spiral and we've got to get it turned around.

I'm profoundly of the view that one of the things that we need help with as well, and I make an appeal just as someone made one to me and I appreciate and respect and accept the point that you make to me, I want to make one going back the other way from my vantage point here. And this isn't a color vantage point. This is just from my experience, if you will, in terms of this job and trying to filter all the information that I can through my head.

I think our economy is in enough trouble right now that isn't being treated and there's no strategy for treating it in any fundamental way, that it is accelerating this problem that we're here talking about today. It is applying an economic pressure to this problem that's making this problem worsen faster. And it's heightening the antagonism that Mr. Underwood or anybody feels when they get on or off an elevator, whatever else, because of just the sheer failure of us to understand the need to take and address our economic problems.

And that's why the sort of fear-mongering and racial prejudice mongering, which is now going on in the political arena, is able to succeed so well and why the notion that maybe a Black person is taking a White person's job when there aren't enough jobs for White people or Black people.

And in fact, if you can have a strategy in place that makes sure there aren't enough jobs to go around, you can probably create a political issue that will work every single time playing off the racial fear and the racial prejudice that's out there.

And so, I see that happening. And I think it's very threatening to this country. And I think it's very threatening to every person in our society to allow conditions like that to exist and to fester. And people are being ground up every single day. I mean, we're losing lives, people who are being killed, people whose lives are being impaired for a lifetime.

By and large, the Government of our country, or at least the major policy leaders of our country, are sort of passing by on the other side. Or in fact, taking a ride off it politically.

And that's why it seems to me that the one message that every person in this country ought to be able to agree on is that we ought to have enough jobs to go around, that everybody in America ought to have a chance to work. And a Black person or a Hispanic person or a White person shouldn't have to go to the Persian Gulf to get a job and find when they come home there's no job here. And that we can have an economic program for Mexico and for Kuwait and for virtually every country around the face of the Earth, but we can't have an economic program for America.

That we can build cities around the world, we can't build Detroit or we can't build Washington, we can't build other places.

Is that the best we can say as a nation after all of these years, 1991? I don't think so. I don't think so.

But if we don't fight for an economic program that has built into it economic justice, if you've got an economy that doesn't allow for economic justice, then it's going to take and tilt over and I think drive the negative forces of economic injustice and racial injustice.

I wish that weren't so. I mean, if I had the power to change that, boy, I'd change it. It would be the first thing I'd do.

But that gets into the difficulty of changing attitudes that people have in this society and we've got to work on it and we are working on it. But when the economy is working against us, it makes all of our other problems worse. And it's going to divide this country and there are people who thrive on dividing the country. There are people that get elected on dividing the country and setting Blacks against Whites and Whites against Blacks. And it's just as wrong as it can be.

I see it right now. All the political commentary we're hearing about the so-called quota issue coming down the track. I'd like to have somebody have a quota program and the quota program was we've got this many people. Let's have this many jobs. If you have enough jobs to go around, the quota issue goes away.

If you want to invent a quota issue, the way you do it is you make sure there are not enough jobs to go around. Then you've got a quota issue. And who's going to get the jobs?

Well, we can't have that. I mean, that's not what America is about. It's not why I came here 25 years ago. It's not why you, sir, not why you're here today. It's not why Senator Sanford's here.

So we're here today, and I'm here to say, I don't accept that. That's why we're having this hearing. We're having it here because we want to try to get this message out as wide and as far as we can to the people across this country, to everybody in the country.

It's not easy to do, as you well know. I mean, you've been working at it, Dr. Franklin, you've been working at it probably longer than anybody to try to get this message out.

But if we can get this economy squared away and insist on some measure of concentration on problems here at home, whether we're talking about broad policy or we're talking about grassroots, we're going to have some things to work with and we can make some things happen.

And this racial antagonism issue, I think we'll be able with moral leadership to take that on and deal with that issue, and solve that issue.

We can't do it in an economy that's floundering. We just can't do it, in my view.

Did you have a final comment to make, Senator Sanford?

Senator SANFORD. My final comment is thank you all very much. And hang in there.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

The committee stands in recess.

[Whereupon, at 12:46 p.m., the committee was recessed.]

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